

ORPHANS

By HELEN
DAWES
BROWN



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By Helen Dawes Brown

ORPHANS.

MR. TUCKERMAN'S NIECES. Illustrated.

A BOOK OF LITTLE BOYS. Illustrated.

THE PETRIE ESTATE. Also in paper
binding

TWO COLLEGE GIRLS.

LITTLE MISS PHŒBE GAY. Illustrated.

HER SIXTEENTH YEAR. A Sequel to
"Little Miss Phœbe Gay."

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON AND NEW YORK

ORPHANS

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BY

HELEN DAWES BROWN



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
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ORPHANS

CHAPTER I

IN STORAGE

IS papa going to the stowage warehouse?"

"No, Susanna, he is n't."

"Why is n't papa going?"

"Geraldine, I'm ready to have my collar hooked."

"*Why* is it papa is n't going to the stowage warehouse?"

"Well, he is n't, that's all. Oh, you caught my hair, Geraldine. Be careful! There, how does that look? How do you like my hat, chick?" Susanna's mother continued, studying the charming head in the mirror.

"I'm going to get my own hat. I'm going," said the determined voice of Susanna.

"No, you're not, miss. You are going to stay right here with Geraldine."

"I don't want to stay in this hotel with Geraldine. There is n't a single thing to do."

"That feather ought to be freer," said Mrs. Warriner, with great seriousness. "It should have more chance to float; the breeze can't take it, fastened down like that. Give me the scissors!"

"I won't stay at home with Geraldine!"

"Will you stop behaving so when I am trying to do this difficult thing, that's quite beyond Geraldine, that really requires a mil-liner of the greatest experience. *Everything* depends upon this feather." Mrs. Warriner seized her young daughter and sat her down as hard as luxurious hotel upholstery would permit. "Now be quiet, will you? Oh, such children as I 've got!"

"Am I worse'n Danny, or is Danny worse'n me?" inquired Susanna in an interested voice. She settled back in her chair and took the comfort of it.

Mrs. Warriner stood before her mirror with the feather floating at last to her satisfaction.

She pushed up her soft brown hair, tilted her chin, half closed her eyes, and smiled.

“You look very nice,” said her little daughter.

“How’s my hat, Sukey?”

“You look just like a lady in a picture.”

“You are rather a nice child — can be, if you try.”

“Oh, mamma, can’t I please go?”

“Geraldine, you’ve got to go down town for me. I believe I will take this child along to dispose of her. I can’t leave her alone here.”

Susanna leaped from her chair. “Oh, I just love to ride in a cab. Oh, a hansom, mamma, a hansom!”

“Well, if you must dance, dance into your clothes, and be quick about it.”

A loitering, observing old gentleman let his gaze rest a full half minute on a picture framed in black — a half-length seen above the doors of a hansom cab. “Mother and child — mother and child,” murmured the old sentimentalist; “most beautiful of all pic-

tures." He liked to play with his old-fashioned musings. "You can't spoil it; it's always beautiful, high and low, rich and poor," so thought fondly this happy grandfather.

Both mother and daughter divided attention between the little mirrors on either side of their cab and the scenes of the street they traversed. Susanna gave suppressed squeals of delight, and bounced about in her seat.

"You must learn to sit perfectly still in a carriage. That is one of the *great* things to learn, my child." This lady of the floating feather could be very serious.

"But I can't sit still when I see things all round, everywhere! Look, look, behind — oh, mamma, you did n't look quick enough."

"Be a good child, and we'll end at Huyler's."

"Papa always does."

"How would you like to go and visit grandma, — make her a beautiful long visit, eh ?"

"I should n't like it. You have to keep so still at grandma's."

“And let mamma have a nice rest and journey in Europe, with her friends the Jackmans?”

“I’d go, too.”

“Well, we’ll see. Now jump out: you will like this jeweler’s.”

Next it was a fancy-work shop, and next a photographer’s studio.

“I’ll try one pose with you, honey.” Mrs. Warriner’s eyes rested wistfully on her little daughter, then glanced into a mirror. After a moment of indecision: “Let’s off with our hats, girlie.”

“Ah, yes, yes, yes,” murmured the photographer, who would have liked to be a Raphael; “the mother and child, the mother and child.”

Something in the rapt and reverent look of the little man as he hovered over the two, communicated itself to his sitters. The hat with the floating plume was tossed upon the sofa, and lay dejected and lifeless.

“Now!” spoke the photographer. The face of the mother wore a look of purity and tenderness that a Raphael indeed might have

painted, while the face of the child turned towards her with perfect innocence and trust. No doubt that was the reason why people called Jenner a great photographer.

"Our last errand is the most important," said Mrs. Warriner, as she thrust in her sparkling hat-pins. "The storage warehouse."

"Huyler's," murmured Susanna.

"You need n't be afraid," laughed her mother. "I've got to lay in my own Sunday supplies."

Susanna bobbed into her seat in the hansom, and folded her hands in her lap, in sheer satisfaction with a world of sugar-plums. "I see myself in the glass," she said gleefully. "Oh, see me!"

But a change had come over her pretty mother. She looked straight before her down the ugly, sunless street into which they had turned.

The storage warehouse was a modish structure, simulating a fortress dwelling of feudal times.

"Why, it's just like a picture in 'Marmion.'

How funny!" Susanna's one word for incongruity was hard worked in these days, had one but noticed. "What did we come for?" she asked as they drew up before the grim portal.

"I have business here. Don't talk to me."

The cab waited an instant before the forbidding gateway. Susanna kindled with memories of Scott, and hoped for drawbridge and portcullis. It was a tame conclusion when a liveried servant held wide the door for them to pass in.

Susanna perched upon a high chair, swung her feet off, and took an intelligent observation. She decided that a "funnier" place she had never seen, with its tall clocks and marble statuary standing uneasily about among office desks and type-writers. She felt sorry for the clocks and the statues.

She saw her mother advance to a gilded grating, and saw two clerks hasten forward to the window.

Mrs. Warriner shed a brilliant glance on both, and spoke to the good-looking one.

She rested a delicately gloved hand on one of the gilded bars, and meant that he should observe the turn of her wrist, while she attended to business.

“I wish to see my things. They came here a week ago.” Addresses and dates were called for by the young man, and were set down by him, under a running stream of pretty protests and confidences. “I have missed certain things. You know there are some things you simply can’t live without.”

The young clerk explained to the lady what was the method of packing. “The room, you understand, madam, is of the same size as the van, and the furniture is closely packed into the space by the same system, you understand, madam. That makes it a little difficult to look for a small article, you see for yourself.”

“But could n’t you just set the things out?”

“There are six rooms,” pleaded the young man.

“But are n’t they my own things? Have n’t

I a right to see my own property? Why, there are a dozen things I have wanted already."

The polite young man was sorrier than ever. "If you wished to employ our men," he murmured.

"Oh, no, I've paid enough already. I am nearly ruined, as it is, with all these frightful expenses."

The clerk made marks with his pencil, and cast up her story in his mind.

"Well, I can go and look, can't I?" she pleaded. "I can do as much as that? Who knows but I may see the very thing I want?"

"Certainly, madam. Just take the elevator."

"Do you want to go, chickadee?" Mrs. Warriner held out her hand to Susanna with a gay gesture. "Come on!"

Susanna sprang from her chair. "Oh, *yes!*"

The men distributed among the clocks and statues took a long look at the party as they left the room. The clerk that had been overlooked said cordially, "There's one man I would n't be," while the under-bookkeeper hummed an air from light opera.

The elevator rose lightly to the next floor. "Was it pianos?" asked the man at the helm, stopping his car. An acre or more of muffled pianos stretched far around them, silenced and shrouded in gray rubber.

"Mercy on us," said Mrs. Warriner. "I didn't know there *were* so many pianos! They look like ghosts!"

"So many folks break up," said the clerk agreeably. "I'm musical myself. What I say is, they didn't play the piano *enough*. They would n't break up so easy if they did."

"Oh, how I wish they'd all begin to play at once!" cried Susanna.

They left behind the dismal company of rubber-clad pianos, and passed upward to the third floor.

"Open storage," explained the clerk. "Perhaps you'd like to see the works of art hanging on the walls. Some of those paintings hang there for years: it's generally their size," he said lucidly.

Mrs. Warriner declared herself too busy to look at oil paintings. The young clerk talked

on. He had one sure element of success: he had found the human interest in his business. "The curious thing is, people leave their goods," he continued, — "forget about 'em — don't seem to care after a while. Pay their bills two or three years — then don't pay. Dead perhaps."

"What do you do?" Mrs. Warriner asked with sudden solemnity.

"Sell 'em for what they 'll bring."

The lady gave a little shiver.

"Fourth! Here we are. These are the six rooms, in a row. I will unlock all the doors, and you may see what you want."

"One at a time, not all at once." Her voice was so sharp with pain that the young man wanted to look at her face, but refrained, on a fine instinct.

"Oh — oh — oh!" came from Susanna, and expressed all the emotions her nine years were capable of. The last *oh* was awe-struck, in presence of a wreck.

"That's your home, honey." Mrs. Warriner stood before the tight-packed mass of

tables, chairs, and sofas. "That's your home. They look all legs, and legs in the air, besides. Tables and chairs could n't look more uncomfortable, could they? Well, I am glad I can laugh!" Not a pleasant laugh, thought the young clerk, intent on the human interest.

"That is n't our home," said Susanna after thinking. "A home is when the furniture is arranged."

"That's just about it, you kid," laughed Mrs. Warriner again. "Some homes are—and not a bit more."

Their attendant was luckily in good athletic training. He responded with alacrity to Mrs. Warriner's pleading, "Oh, could you just move that bureau a little so that I could see behind it? Just out a *little* more, — oh, you are so kind. Oh, don't lift it, *please* don't! Just give it the least little push!" Mrs. Warriner had had that gift of the housewife—graceful, wheedling superintendence of other people's work. She now, by almost imperceptible means, accomplished precisely what she set out to do. The civil young clerk

shoved and pushed and lifted about her belongings, till she released him with "Now I know it is n't here ; now I know it must be in the other place. In fact, I am quite sure I left it there myself. You have been so kind!"

Susanna was greatly excited. The moment of awe-struck sorrow had passed ; she was elated with the novelty of seeing familiar possessions shorn of their dignity, helpless, useless, and distraught.

"Oh, there's the little red table ! I guess it thinks it's funny to be upside down, and all filled up with waste-baskets. See all the lookin'-glasses faced up against the wall. I guess they 'll get tired of that wall ! Oh, mamma, it's so dark in there!"

"Dark as the grave," said her mother. "Shut the door ; lock it."

Mrs. Warriner turned away, with a great wave of pity for herself overwhelming every other thought. "What I have been through ! Nobody knows what I have been through. How I could ever have lived through it if it had n't been for the Jackmans !"

Susanna, meanwhile, was busying herself.

“What have you there, for mercy’s sake, child?”

“It’s mine. I’m going to keep it. It’s my little rocking-chair when I was three years old, and it’s the comfortablest chair I ever sat in.”

“But you can’t carry about that ridiculous little chair. You might as well give it away. Perhaps this kind gentleman has a little girl three years old.”

Oh, no, he had not, he declared shyly.

“I won’t give it to her if he has,” cried Susanna wrathfully. “It’s mine! It’s mine!”

It would be painful to say that a lady of such lovely looks yanked her child after her to the carriage, but that was the truth. The civil young clerk followed with the little rocking-chair, and on his own responsibility gave it to the driver.

Susanna’s grieved and angry sobs died down to sniffs and gulps, till broken words began to come. “I *wanted* so many things; I chose out that.”

“I am ashamed to drive down the Lake

Shore with a child bawling. For shame! Driver," snapped Mrs. Warriner. She pushed up the little door in the roof, whose working had been always a joy to Susanna. "Driver, go down another street!" The man balanced the rocking-chair on the top of his hansom, and supposed that he understood.

"Now, are you going to behave, miss? As if I had n't trouble enough, as if it did n't make me feel badly enough to see that pretty home I worked over so, all scrunched up like that! Such a time as I had with curtains only last fall — all for nothing now!"

"When shall we move into a new house?"

"Oh, I don't know, child, I don't know. Oh, I am so miserable, and you make it so much worse." Tears of her mother made Susanna "good" at once; so for a long time had they acted on Susanna's father.

"Muzzer, muzzer, dear 'ittle muzzer, don't cry, don't cry."

"I am so unhappy, so unhappy. People are so unkind!"

Susanna mothered her and comforted her;

and both alighted at the hotel with smiling faces. Mrs. Warriner broke into a laugh as she spied the tilting little rocking-chair. "Well, upon my word, it *was* lucky it was n't the Lake Shore! Porter, send it up to my room. Yes, dear, you shall. Why, Sukey, we forgot all about Huyler's."

Mrs. Warriner's passage to the elevator was followed by attentive eyes. One hotel clerk whispered to the next, "Got her decree yesterday. Saw it in this morning's paper."

CHAPTER II

BROTHER AND SISTER

YOU aren't going to boarding-school," said Daniel, strutting about the room. "You've got to stay with grandma. I'd hate to keep still all the time."

"I'm going with you," said Susanna firmly.

"They won't have girls. Oh, I've seen the pictures. There's a big ball ground, and there's a big pond of water. Next Thursday's the day I'm going."

Susanna showed how troubled eyes of nine years can look. But she cheerfully kept on telling news. "It was full of pianos and pictures that people did n't want, and little teeny rooms crammed and stuffed with folks' furniture while they had n't any homes."

"And every feller has to bring his sheets and piller-cases and towels, and papa said he never bought any ; blest if he knew."

"I know. I'll go with papa. Danny, what

do you think? There's 'To Rent or For Sale' in our parlor window, where we used to stand and watch —"

Danny finished her sentence: "Posty and the lamplighter man. And watched for papa, till we heard his key."

"Then, who'd get there first, that was what, was n't it, Danny?"

The little brother and sister had told each other the news of two days, and looked about for further matter for conversation. The cheerless luxury of the hotel room held no suggestion. It was a room for the vacant-minded, not for the active intellects of Daniel and Susanna.

"You can't see one thing out of this window: it's too high up." The little boy hung out from the ninth floor window-sill, swung his heels, and surveyed the chimney-tops.

"I'll call Geraldine if you don't mind mamma about the windows," said Susanna, though tempted herself by the fearful joy.

Geraldine, on whom hotel leisure hung heavy also, had sauntered down the corridor

for a chat with the chambermaid on guard. "They're awful fond of each other, them children," she remarked. "They don't know yet they're going to be separated for good. The decree said the girl with the mother, and the boy with the father, but they was to visit."

The chambermaid was of a cold Northern race, and pretended not to be curious. She said unresponsively, "Childern is awful big nuisance."

"There'll be a howlin' when they find it out."

"They always howlin' about someting," replied the unsympathetic one.

Geraldine was eager to impart details, and at last got the chambermaid to listen.

"It's like dat always in dis country." She shook her head. "I never see such country." She spelled out the yellow journals, and was learning to read English by diligent application to the daily scandals.

Susanna continued to cry, "Danny, please come away from that window. If you don't, I shall come there, too, and hold you."

But as Danny hung out of the window, he thought of other things than the tin roofs below him; for Danny was almost eleven.

"Are n't we going to live anywhere?" he asked. "Don't we have any house any longer?"

"It's funny," said Susanna solemnly. "I think it's very funny."

"Don't everybody have a home somewhere, that's what I'd like to know. We've got a boarding-school, and a hotel, and grandma's. Grandma's is the only one that's a house. I don't see!"

"It's funny!" said Susanna again.

"I don't see anything funny about it." Daniel brought a more powerful mind to bear on the situation. "Perhaps they have n't got money enough. It costs money to keep house," echoed Danny, feeling old and instructive.

"You're going away, Danny," wailed Susanna. "You're going away and I can't see you."

"Grandma's is all right for a girl. There's Aunt Anna, too. She knows how to wrastle.

She tried to put me down, and she could n't do it, you bet she could n't. Aunt Anna 's all right."

"I want to go home," was Susanna's reply.

"I want to go home," she sobbed.

"You 're making a great noise," said Danny, standing over her, considerably moved himself.

"I want to go home," repeated Susanna.

"Where 's my father? Why does n't he come? Oh, I want to go home so bad!"

Daniel looked very stern, but he could not speak. When Susanna threw her arms about him, he heaved a great sob, and then another, but shed not a tear. When his little sister felt him tremble, she took to comforting him, instantly. "Oh, Danny, I 'll never go away from you. We 'll have a little teeny house, and we 'll live together, Danny." Visions of Lilliputian housekeeping soothed the little sister.

Her brother pretended to have forgotten his emotion. "I have n't seen all of this hotel," and he began to turn on and off the electric

lights. He tried the faucets in the bath-room, and having exhausted these pleasures, sauntered carelessly into the corridor, tested the benches and sofas, and rang the bells of all three elevators.

Geraldine had disappeared altogether, refreshments having been suggested by the cold Scandinavian.

“Let’s run ! You can’t get there first !”

A door flew open as the children tore down the corridor. “What’s this ? What’s all this about ? We don’t have children running in the halls, not in this hotel, no, no ! I shall have to speak to Mr. Bartlett in the office. He’ll see to such children !” It was a very angry little old lady who stood in her doorway and shook her head at them. As Miss Betsey Trotwood lay in wait for donkeys, and had them promptly driven off her premises, so this good lady was on the alert for children, and as she had nothing in the world to do, dashed out upon them a dozen times a day. She was quite within her rights ; they should have been racing in the fields.

"You lemme ketch you kids," said the elevator boy who had traveled eight stories at their summons.

The way of the transgressor was not, however, always so hard. The hotel flatterer lay in wait for them as well as the angered and outraged old lady. They stood off from her caresses, but listened sheepishly to her expressions of delight. "They say children get noticed too much in a hotel, but how can you help it when they *are* such little dears ! Look at those eye-lashes. Skin like a rose petal. And the boy, a fine, manly little fellow, is n't he?" It was a lowering look she got from Daniel, and no look at all from Susanna.

"Le's try another floor," said Daniel.

"They 're all ezactly alike," Sue answered drearily.

On the floor above was found still another type of lady, a traveler, this time. She glanced compassionately at the little pair, who looked so small measured by the height and length of the hotel corridor.

"Children in hotels," she sighed; "poor

little souls ! They look as if they belonged to the 'neglected rich.' See, Emily, what a pretty little couple this is!"

"Have you seen their mother?" inquired the lady, whose name was Mrs. Holladay. "I wonder if she understands her business."

"Probably not," sighed Miss Jane Wilkins, and wished she could adopt the little girl with the big pink bow.

"Well, Jane, when you have done watching those children's evolutions, I really wish you would get ready to go out with me. If you had had as many children as I have, you wouldn't be so sentimental about them. Come, get on your bonnet."

All at once there rang up and down the corridors, and from floor to floor, that sound of terror, the fire gong. Clang ! clang ! harsh, swift, imperative. Hearts stood still, throats grew parched, lips stiffened. At that hour of the day few but women were in the hotel, and these rushed from their rooms clutching their valuables, and silent or shrieking, according to the nature and nerves of each. There was

a panic of about a minute and a half, before smiling officials could assure the guests that the fire gong had gone off entirely by mistake; the apparatus must have been in some inexplicable way out of order.

“What an outrage!” cried the ladies. “If such things are allowed to happen, I shall leave this place. It is a perfect shame to have a thing like that out of order,” and so on and so on, throughout the long day, till their husbands came home at night to hear the story.

Meanwhile, the experienced Mrs. Holladay had her own theory. “I noticed that boy studying the alarm box by the elevator, and I know the influence of the comic supplement.”

True it was that Daniel in the course of his explorations had stood fascinated before an object hung on the wall by the elevator, a glass case enclosing a red lever. He had read with round eyes the inscription, “In case of fire, break the glass and turn lever to the right.” The words that were read with safety by staid and stolid matrons who waited for

the elevator, had fired the imagination of a lively lad.

The excitement over, Daniel kept discreetly within the closed door of his mother's room. In sheer ennui he kicked his heels, and scanned the walls, windows that saw nothing, and mirrors that reflected the windows. At last his eye settled on a telephone: "I'm going to ring somebody up!"

"Oh, telephone to papa! Let me!" cried Susanna.

"Give me 4660 Shore," said Dan in the lordliest tone he could muster.

"Will you repeat that?" said the voice from the hotel office.

"It's my father's number; 4660 Shore."

"Oh, it's you kids, is it? Well, you better let that 'phone be." And all was cruel silence.

"I thought — I thought we could speak to papa," wailed Susanna.

"I guess I've a right — I guess I've as good a right," Danny blustered, too choked with rage to get a sentence into shape. "I

guess I can speak to *my father*—" and Danny was nearer crying than was comfortable.

"It's just like everything now," Susanna wailed. "Why doesn't papa come?"

"He'll never come again to stay. You are such a little thing, you don't understand."

"You said you did n't see yourself," argued Susanna.

Daniel frowned and did not answer.

At this moment there was a rustle of silk petticoats, and the door opened. "Where is Geraldine, I should like to know?" was Mrs. Warriner's first question. "Is there one of them that can be trusted? Have you been good children?"

They looked at each other, and did not answer. They took the inquiry as a mere form of greeting, and kissed their mother in reply.

Jessie Warriner looked her little boy over, was proud of his erect figure and the carriage of his head. She nodded and smiled, and set his scarlet necktie straight. "Stylish little man!" she said.

"That's one of my father's neckties," Danny remarked with filial pride. "He said it was too gay for him."

"When are you going to High Top, sonny?"

"Next week," he answered with pride increasing. "There are n't any girls at that school." For Daniel and Susanna had hitherto attended a city school of little boys and girls.

"Don't you love your little sister? Are you glad to leave Sue, you heartless child?"

"It's the other girls I'm glad to leave," said this candid boy.

"Are you glad to leave this other girl? Are you glad to leave your mammy?" Jessie's piteous mouth and tearful eyes wrought upon Dan's stout heart.

"I don't *want* to leave anybody," he cried out. "I'd rather stay and have us all together — and never go away — anywhere — ever." And he drove the top of his head into his mother's shoulder. Even then Daniel shed no tears.

"This will simply not *do*," said Jessie War-riner. "Susanna, bring that box of candy."

For a half hour they were tolerably merry, though the unconscious children with their simplest speeches "stabbed" their mother. So she expressed it, in the language of the theatre, which she knew well. Her self-pity was all alive as she saw herself in this "cruel situation." It was in vain that she tried to suppress references to what she called "the past."

"Oh, don't you 'member the night we had the fire in the next house, and papa carried us out in our night-gowns?"

"Stop talking about fires, child. They get on my nerves." A sullen expression crossed Mrs. Warriner's face.

"Who is going to live in our house now?" inquired Daniel.

"It is n't our house now," said Susanna, eager to tell what she had discovered. "It says, 'Apply to J. L. Drew and Co., Real Estate Agents.' I read it. Geraldine walked past when we went to walk. She said it made her sick."

"Geraldine better hold her tongue."

"It looked so *funny*, with no curtains, and oh, the windows so dirty. I guess it was the windows made Geraldine sick."

"Geraldine's days are numbered, thank goodness!"

"When are you going to Europe, mamma?" asked Daniel sensibly.

"Next Saturday. We leave here to-morrow night."

"We'll all come to see you off!" cried Dan.

"Nobody's coming to see me off," said Mrs. Warriner dramatically. "We will say good-by here. Geraldine is going to take Susanna to grandma's to-morrow, and that's the end of Geraldine, let us be thankful."

That undesirable person appeared at the door. "The's a man come to take Master Danny home — to take him back." Mrs. Warriner scowled at the correction.

"If mamma's at home — if mamma's back in America, Danny boy, you'll come and spend Christmas holidays with her; and if she is n't back by that time, why then you'll go to grandma's and visit Sukey."

The boy was solemn and silent. It dawned upon him that more portentous things were happening than just a little boy's departure for boarding-school and his mother's going abroad for her health. He let himself be led out to the elevator—did not prance ahead and ring the bell as usual. They went down together, the mother holding a hand of each child. Both were looking up into her face, and both were perfectly still. They went to the quiet side entrance of the hotel, and Jessie stooped to her little boy and kissed him good-by.

Two ladies stepped from the elevator at the ninth floor, as Jessie and her daughter walked away in the opposite direction.

“Did you notice them, Jane?” said Mrs. Holladay. “I have just heard: the parents of the little brother and sister have lately separated.”

“Twentieth-century orphans!”

CHAPTER III

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ANNA

ANNA was the daughter of Judge Day and his young wife Roberta. When, thirty-five years ago, the confirmed bachelor had taken for bride the lovely Roberta Leland, not out of her teens, the world was divided between the romance of the match and its folly. Alexander Day did not live to be disappointed in his wife. In the second year of marriage, still blind with romance, he left her and their little girl, and to the end believed he had been the happiest of men. What he might have made of her in course of years, with his forceful and life-giving personality, none can say. We only know that he loved her truly, and that his last days were filled with his own great sorrow, the loss of Roberta and his child. It struck cold and strange across his reasonable mind that with all the sympathy for his physical suffering there was nowhere pity that he must let go

of sweet human life. He followed his loved ones with sad eyes; what was their loss to his? This was his thought, even while he entered the wide Unknown with courage and with faith.

The young widow was for a time beautified by her husband's last thought of her. She was tender and sober and dignified. Her character stood still for a time, his firm touch yet upon it. She honored his portrait, read over his letters and wept gently. But, little by little, she spent more time before her mirror, and entered into her rôle of young widowhood with increasing animation.

When, two years later, she married again, matrons of authority said she did well. It was felt that in her second marriage she was much more suitably mated.

Marcus Glenn was a man of her own social set, near her own age, and possessed of means to place her in her natural sphere. "Judge Day," it was added, "had very *little* of course. That first match was wildly romantic."

Marcus Glenn carried his wife and her little Anna to live in another Lake city, farther to the north. The newly wedded pair gave immediate attention to building a house on an eligible corner. This house of more than thirty years ago still stood in the Western town, and was still occupied by Roberta Glenn: an old house in a young city. Mrs. Glenn explained to every visitor this honorable stability of house and family — thirty years in the same spot! — as marking the difference between the city of her adoption and that great city down the Lake, with its shifting, drifting population, its changing neighborhoods, and uncertain values of real estate.

The house of the Glenns belonged to the period of the Mansard roof and the cupola. All was square, spacious, and comfortable. Picturesqueness had not set in so early as the seventies. A wide lawn, trees that had grown noble in thirty years, and vines in long training, gave distinction to a home that would have been otherwise commonplace.

Within, the house had the look of transi-

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tion that marks many an American home ; the compromise between two generations, two sets of possessions, two stages of culture. The effect was not harmonious ; nevertheless, it had the look of a home which is a natural growth. Anna had had her education at an eastern college where æsthetics were regarded, and on her return home, had carried on year by year a process of artful elimination. Yet the girl had a softness of heart for many a thing quite "wrong," because, forsooth, it had been a part of her childhood.

On entering the home of her second marriage, Mrs. Glenn had hung the portrait of Judge Day in his little daughter's room. "I wish Anna to grow up to know her father and to feel his influence."

Mrs. Glenn had in a high degree the quality now called "suggestibility." On the day previous to this declaration, she had been visited by the sister of Judge Day. Miss Alma Day had asked, "Would you like to send the portrait back to us, Roberta ? Anna must have it, of course, eventually. Indeed, we would

rather have it stay with Anna now, that she may grow up with it, and that it may help her to know her father and to feel his influence. But just as you think about it, Roberta. You might place it in Anna's room."

Mrs. Glenn at once thought this her own idea, and repeated these words throughout Anna's childhood. Therefore, while the little girl called her good-natured young step-father papa, she was taught to call father the man of grave, distinguished mien who stood forth from the portrait.

"She is going to look like her father," said Judge Day's sister. "But she 'll never be a young beauty, like her half-sister Jessica Glenn. Anna will have to wait for her looks. We do in our family," said Miss Alma, conscious of a good carriage and fine gray hair.

Mrs. Glenn was a second time a widow by the time her little daughters were aged eight and five. Roberta settled into a contented and becoming widowhood, and, as everybody told her, devoted herself to the bringing up of her two little girls. But it was hardly truer

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of Topsy than of Anna and Jessie, that they "growed." Their little characters took each its own way, and soon diverged. Not that one became good, and the other bad ; it was no such simple matter as that. They grew to be spoilt children of quite different types.

Anna narrowly escaped being a disagreeable child, and a still more disagreeable girl ; while Jessie had pretty ways and passed for a nice child. Here and there a critical aunt feared irresponsibility was a mark of her character. But how could you expect anything else at her age ? She will develop, was the answer.

The aunt shook her head. " Nevertheless, she 's a sweet child, and as pretty as a picture. I always feel rather sorry for Anna. She 's at the awkward age ; Jessie will never be, but then Jessie will never get beyond a certain point," said the aunt.

Anna was at this time ungraceful, shy, and looked with a lowering eye at her mother's callers. She had discovered the word bore, and applied it freely. She was superior at

fifteen, and it set her wrong with the world. In course of time she went to college at the instigation of her aunt Alma. There she luckily encountered many people whom she recognized as her superiors. This was perhaps the best thing that she gained at college. She was carefully taught there to detect and revere superiority. She came home less critical, more discerning; for she had learned under a wise teacher the use of her imagination. That teacher had studied the girl, and had confided in her friend who was Anna's instructor in English. "Anna is inclined to solitude. She needs a friend, as I have you." They smiled at each other happily, for there is no greater felicity in friendship than that known among college teachers.

"Capacity for friendship must be in such a nature as hers."

"I have n't felt sure whether she had a heart to match her intellect. You English teachers in your interviews have a chance to know the whole girl as we do not in the class-room."

“She is less shy when she writes,” said the essay teacher, “much less self-conscious.”

“That is the artist. Is it possible she has that in her?”

“Her mind is just ready to bloom. She has been, I fancy, a close, reserved girl. You see them here often, and it is the college that supplies just the atmosphere for their flowering. Somebody was wise to send her here.”

“What a departure from the old-fashioned love story! Is it college that wakens a girl’s soul in these days?”

“She is old for her years,” the other meditated. “I saw her one day with her mother; she looked the older of the two, if anything.”

“I fancy it is a case of Hamlet and his young mother. It would be easy to infer Hamlet’s father, even if we had no ghost. I am certain I can see Judge Day.”

“A good friendship is what that girl needs, and I know the friend for her,” the botany teacher concluded.

Anna Day’s friend of college days and of all her after years was that Pauline Ester-

brook who was invited on the next Saturday to take a long tramp into the country with Anna and the assistant in botany. The teacher effaced herself and pretended to be absorbed in specimens. The two girls wandered together, each surprised and elated to find the other.

“And we were only freshmen then,” they would say to each other regularly as years went on. “How good that we lost no time!”

Anna came out of college by no means a finished product; but in the thirteen years that followed college, she herself supposed that she had had her discipline and her story. At thirty-four she regarded both as ended.

First had come that difficult transition year from college to her home. Her younger sister had meantime graduated at a young ladies' school, had “come out” the following winter, and soon after Anna's return had become engaged to a pleasant young fellow she had danced with through two winters. The wedding had taken place in October, and everybody said that these events simplified matters

for Mrs. Glenn. "A college daughter is troublesome enough in society without the complication of an attractive younger sister. It is a little unfortunate that the elder sister should act as bridesmaid, but Jessie once out of the way, Anna stands a far better chance. It is well, too, that young Mrs. Warriner is to make her home in Chicago. The two sisters will not be brought into perpetual contrast."

Mrs. Glenn labored for three or four years to make of her elder daughter a social success ; and when she failed to do so, attributed it, as every one else did, to her having been over-educated. The truth of the case the lady never dreamed.

Anna had submitted with a good grace to "coming out"; in fact enjoyed it. She took pride in showing that college had not spoiled her, and that she could laugh and dance with the gayest. Good times—a whole winter of them—had a wonderful freshness and zest for her. She meant to be an all-round young girl ; she was twenty-two, with the heart of sixteen, she laughingly told her mother.

"Ah, college does keep you young," she exulted. "And inexperienced," she added happily.

For there was stealing upon her in its first exquisite sensitiveness a consciousness that made her tremble. It grew and absorbed her thoughts and penetrated her days and nights, and swept other interests into oblivion, till Anna had given her heart away, and given it before it had been sought. The youth had been thoughtless, perhaps modest, since he had cared for her society without suspicion that she might care for his. When, with naïve surprise and delight, he found this out, the proud girl, in fear lest she had shown her heart, drew back in shame, cold and repellent. Modestly believing that he had made a mistake, the young man acted on what he supposed was a hint, and, from a happy intimacy, fell back to the old casual acquaintance. And Anna lacked the courage or the passion to call him to her again.

No one knew what had happened to her—she took grim comfort in that. People ob-

served her and interpreted her as accurately as people do. "She doesn't care for society. She doesn't care for men," they said, while her young heart ached.

"Mrs. Glenn has a duckling on her hands," said the next; "though not an ugly one, as it proves. That girl has grown handsome in this one winter out of college."

"Well, I am disappointed. I certainly thought there was something between Anna and that young friend of yours; they have seen a great deal of each other, I know for a fact. But they didn't hit it off, somehow. I fancy that girl, with all her mature look, is really young and shy."

"One shy person is bad enough, but two together are hopeless. She made him shy,—ah, that is an unfortunate type of woman. She will always bungle her love affairs."

Anna passed through her twenties, leading the useful and ornamental young lady's life of the period.

"That wasn't quite what I was intended for, Pauline, so I thought once. I suppose I

was young. Environment has been too much for me."

In her daughter's second year at home came Mrs. Glenn's complete nervous breakdown, and the beginning of her career as an invalid. It was at this period that Anna's friends took to calling her "poor Anna."

The day when Mrs. Warriner and her little daughter visited their home in storage, was also a painful day for her family in Waukego. Mrs. Glenn's physician of many years had been run down by an automobile, and had died a few hours later in his own hospital. Mrs. Glenn was prostrated. She had her room darkened at once, as was her custom, in preparation for an "attack."

"Sit by me, dear, sit by me. I want nothing," said Mrs. Glenn faintly. Anna sat in the darkness, sharing her mother's sorrow for an old family friend. And that her dear Rose Gummere should have lost the father she idolized!

Mrs. Glenn sighed, "I can shed no tears; it is too great a shock. After what I have been through lately, to have this added!

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The lavender salts on the bureau," she just breathed. "You *won't* leave me?"

Anna could say nothing but "I am here, mother." How soon could she go to Rose Gummere, she wondered.

"Change my doctor? Why, Anna, I can't!"

"How would it do to experiment, to try doing without one?"

Such a suggestion Mrs. Glenn passed over charitably. "He understood me so! He had made such a study of me! I could n't have had such a loss."

Anna took the lavender salts and gave her mother the cologne water, then wiped away some tears of her own.

"It is impossible for me to begin with a new doctor, as complicated as my case has become. No doctor can take the place of Dr. Gummere."

"No," said Anna sadly and absently, thinking still of Rose his daughter.

"You're not listening to me, I know by your tone. I can always tell when people are not attending. As if Jessie's troubles were n't

enough! But a new doctor,—that is *more* than I can bear."

"I am sad enough about Dr. Gummere, mother, but not on your account so much, dear. One of the younger men would be better for you. He was an old-fashioned doctor, and he thought you were an old-fashioned invalid. You're not; you're a modern invalid," said Anna affectionately.

"I'm sure I don't know what you mean. I often don't." Roberta Glenn said it irresistibly, and her daughter laughed and kissed her. It was among the mysterious stirrings of her father in her nature that she often saw her mother as he had seen her—and as few other people did,—the people who sounded the refrain, "Poor Anna!"

Mrs. Glenn almost sat up: "I can't have any experiments tried upon me, my dear."

"I'll protect you, mammy. We won't let any nerve specialist carry you off to his laboratory."

"Nor will I go to a rest cure, or *anything* of the kind. I wondered at Dr. Gummere for suggesting such a thing."

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"A rest cure for poor Anna," good Dr. Gummere had told his daughter.

"I don't know anything about these young doctors," fretted Mrs. Glenn. "How is one to know anything about these young doctors?"

"They are not so painfully young," said Anna. "They are always men past thirty."

"How can I trust myself to an entirely, an utterly and entirely new person?"

"Dr. Gummere spoke well of Dr. Gillespie."

"I have never heard his name," Mrs. Glenn complained, all but tearfully.

CHAPTER IV

FAMILY AFFAIRS

I KNOW you don't like to talk about Jessie's troubles," said Mrs. Glenn querulously.

"We have to discuss family affairs sometimes, mother. I am reasonable. Let us take a walk in the Park, and plan what we are to do. Jessie's letter has to be answered; we are not going to cast her off, I suppose."

"I can't understand why I should be made to suffer so through a child I love. I can't see what I've done to deserve it; it is something I can't understand at all."

"Shall I get your things, mother?"

"Oh, but don't you think it would be too cold in the Park, dear? It is a very cold May here by the Lake. And you get the wind so on the bluff."

"We'll wear our furs," said Anna.

"She seems to have cast *us* off," Mrs. Glenn

went on miserably, as they made ready to go out. "Though she does want us to take care of her silver. Oh, how that brings back her wedding! — one of the *prettiest* weddings there has ever been in Waukego," she said fondly.

After the little walk up-hill they rested on a sunny bench, and looked down from the bluff upon the shining blue water. Her mother was closely veiled, but Anna took the pure, unbreathed air full in her face, and it gave her courage for dealing with trouble. For trouble had come, the real thing.

"If we could have kept it out of the papers," moaned Mrs. Glenn.

Anna laughed angrily.

"I was glad they called it cruelty," said her mother.

"That was rather handsome of Bert, wasn't it? They said he threw things at her. I've seen times when I should have liked to throw things at Jessie."

"How can you talk so about your sister?"

"Half-sister, mamma."

"I thought you said you would not cast her off," Mrs. Glenn pleaded.

"I think she is quite right to take herself out of the way for a while," said Anna gently.

"Europe," murmured Mrs. Glenn. "What could we do without Europe?"

Anna threw back her furs and laughed.

"You are so cheerful," said her mother complainingly. "Sometimes your cheerfulness gets on my nerves." Mrs. Glenn had acquired this phrase the summer before, and had since found it indispensable.

"Well, mamma, you know I have to be cheerful for two," said Anna affectionately. "But what shall we answer Jessie? I suppose you wish me to write the letter." She watched a white sail on the horizon, and was glad there was still so much of beauty left to her.

"Tell her of course we will take the silver," her mother's plaintive voice continued. "I should n't quite like to use it for our guests — with her monogram, should you, Anna? They might recognize their own wedding gifts.

You wouldn't think that quite pleasant, would you?"

Anna's unhappy laugh was this time silenced, and she said soberly, "After this, and with you so delicate, we are not likely to entertain much, are we? We will send the silver to the bank. If Jessie is n't housekeeping, the things can wait for Susanna." Will Susanna want her mother's wedding gifts, she pondered. The old sweet continuity of family possessions — the old chain of happy memories — was it snapped in two by this new order? What, in short, became of heirlooms in a world of divorce?

"Susanna is our great subject, mother, even more than the silver. She asks us if we will take Susanna and the silver. You can't send Susanna to the bank."

"No," Mrs. Glenn assented mildly; "poor child! I expect she will cry."

"I don't know how the children in such cases are expected to behave. They ought to cry, but probably they don't. Susanna is a merry little grig. I don't imagine you can

keep her spirits down. Separating her from Dan is going to make trouble. Oh, yes, I am prepared for tears."

"How long a visit is Susanna likely to make us?" said Mrs. Glenn, as they rose and walked on, among the nurses and perambulators. Anna looked into the babies' faces with a thought she had never had before; something like a prayer rose in her heart that love and truth and faith might abide in those children's homes. "This is what it means," she thought, "to have it come close to you, this dreadful thing that fills the land, this blot on 'the pleasantness of American life.'" Her mother would not have reproached her for cheerfulness had she seen her daughter's true mind.

"Jessie mentions going abroad for the summer with her Jackmans. I can't abide the Jackmans."

"I have never seen them," said Mrs. Glenn.

"Nor have I. I loathe them on instinct."

"Don't you allow yourself to use very strong language, Anna?"

“Well, mother, if ever there was a case for strong language! It makes me sick, the whole business!”

“I am sure it makes me. I have had constant neuralgia ever since we heard,— on the left side of my face.”

“But we've got to bear it,” said Anna; “we have got to make the best of it. Other people have to: look at the Dabneys. Just go straight ahead and say nothing about it, and do what we can for the children. That is my programme: try to take care of the next generation.”

“How can you? How can you take care of the next generation if his father is to have charge of Danny?”

“Danny!” Anna repeated tenderly.

“What I should like to know,” said Mrs. Glenn with great deliberation, “is what is to be our attitude towards their father.”

“Who is said to have thrown things at her?”

“Yes,” her mother replied soberly, “should we properly never see him?” She was so in-

tered in this inquiry that she walked briskly and color appeared in her cheeks. "What is the accepted custom?"

"There ought to be a chapter soon in the etiquette books, since we have got to the point in our fiction where two divorced husbands sit down to drink tea together at the fireside of the former wife. We might write to the Ladies' Guide, Philosopher and Friend. That is the best paper I know for such purposes."

"You don't answer me seriously," Mrs. Glenn complained. "How we are to treat Gilbert, is what I inquire."

"I fancy he will keep away from us. He easily can. However, when Susanna is with us, he has the right to visit her at regular intervals, and she may be sent to visit him. The law has some fatherly feeling. Fancy the judge, with his own young things waiting to run and meet him, laying down such regulations for a father and mother, as part of his day's work. For the sake of the children, let us treat Gilbert as if nothing had happened. We have simply to rise above awkwardness;

it is not for us to punish either of them. They will get their punishment all along ; oh, sometimes I pity them so, mother !”

“I thought you were so hard on them,” said Mrs. Glenn.

“They loved those children ; that ought to have held them together. They will see it when it is too late.”

“But if Gilbert has been unkind to my daughter, I certainly don’t wish to treat him as a son,” said Mrs. Glenn, in a puzzled voice.

“They have been unkind to each other, is the amount of it ; rude and unkind, till it wore out love.”

“You have such ideals of married life,” said Anna’s mother charitably. “I’ve noticed it often in you college women that have never married.”

“Now, mamma, if you are going to be superior and amused, I shall go home,” laughed Anna. “I am quite aware that you have had two delightful husbands.”

Mrs. Glenn smiled and sighed.

“But, mamma, we have got to come right

down to practical details. It's my opinion that Susanna should go to school for the rest of the term. I should put her into Miss Leslie's at once. I have considerable respect for Miss Leslie's. Then will come the long vacation, and I think, mother, we'd better spend the most of the summer here, and depend on the Lake breezes. We can have a month away from home, perhaps, but we cannot travel much, since they have passed those dividends again."

Mrs. Glenn fell to talking anxiously about money matters, and Anna regretted having mentioned economies. She herself was a little bitter about the poverty of the rich, which gets little sympathy. Oh, the luxury of being frankly poor! she said to herself, of having everybody know it! How to escape to a simple life was one of the problems that haunted her. To have absolute wealth in lands, and to be relatively poor, was a false position in which she was perpetually restive. Her mother, born and bred to luxury, honestly suffered if denied it. One of the wholesome

things that Anna had learned at college was blithe acceptance of a different mode of life from that of her own home. The change from her mother's softly cushioned and deeply carpeted domicile to the mild austerities of a college dormitory had been useful preparation for more momentous changes sure to come.

“Do you suppose that stock will ever rise again?” her mother was still saying. “It has never been so low as it is now. I don’t see how it *can* go any lower. Do you see how it *can* go any lower, dear?”

“Don’t worry about C L and R, mother. We have loads of old clothes we can make over, now we have captured that little French dressmaker. And we have lace enough for the rest of our lives.”

“But there is nothing so poverty-stricken as too good lace on a gown. That tells the whole story.”

“And you always look lovely in your black, mamma.”

Mrs. Glenn shook her head and called herself an old woman.

"Not at fifty-five, not a bit of it. You never looked prettier in your life."

This was, indeed, true ; for Anna's mother had the abundant and beautiful gray hair of the American woman, which lends distinction often where there had been none in youth. Too much expression had not left lines in Mrs. Glenn's face ; nor had she sewed or read her eyes dim. The drawback to her beauty was the fretful, troubled look that had come with her ill-health.

"Yes, now, your cheeks are rosy, dear ; you never looked prettier."

"How can you say such things ? You make me think of your father."

"Tell me something about my father."

"You must know him from the portrait. I don't think I could describe him. It was only fifteen months," she said inscrutably. "They were the happiest part of my life."

Anna put her hand on her mother's and they were silent together.

"You think Miss Leslie's is the best?" said Mrs. Glenn, after mother and daughter

had for a little time sat looking away to the sunlit water.

"I should n't think of any other. It is an honest school,—expensive but 'good value.'"

"She has the very best children, I know," said Mrs. Glenn: "the Whitlaws and the Amorys and the Kittredges. They are the children I should wish Susie to associate with. Miss Leslie is very exclusive."

"I am sorry Miss Leslie is away just now. I shall have to see her younger sister. I will go to-day. Then it is settled that I am to write to Jessie that we will take Susanna for the summer,—why, to be sure we will, poor little Sue! It's my private opinion that Jessie had Sue's trunk packed for her grandmother's before ever she wrote that letter, and the silver, too! Why, she is to sail Saturday, and this is Wednesday. If that is n't Jessica!"

"It is a great care to undertake," the grandmother sighed. "I don't know how I am to bear the noise of a child in the house. Still, it is n't so bad as if it were the boy."

"His father is going to dispatch him to boarding-school. Little Dan!"

But his grandmother did not take this softer view of Daniel. "I never shall forget the last time they were all here together. It was last Thanksgiving. I was in bed for a week."

They were now walking home, and soon reached their own door. "Mother, the air has done you good. How well you are looking to-day!"

"Yes, I feel as well as I can ever hope to," Mrs. Glenn answered drearily. "I shall go and lie down."

CHAPTER V

MISS LESLIE'S EDICT

SUSANNA arrived in good time, and nobody would have perceived that she was under a cloud. Her grandmother was puzzled by her spirits, and her aunt was much encouraged. Sue's happy chatter about her journey was the first relief their nerves had had for a fortnight. Anna had almost lost sight of the significance of the visit when she detected the interest of the waitress in the little guest. She caught furtive glances of Minna as she served the others, and a particular care of Susanna's plate. Servants' gossip must then be added to the family affliction.

“How should you like to go to school, little miss, till the middle of June?”

Susanna tilted her head to one side and looked doubtful. “Mamma said I needn't.”

“What would you like to do with your little self the next six months?” asked Aunt Anna.

Sue deliberated, knowing that aunts expected of you something good and useful. "Visit," at length she said amiably. "I thought that when you weren't at home you visited. People don't go to school when they visit."

Anna saw a piece of reasoning and respected it: it asserted the child's right to "home" as a background for its business of "school."

"By 'visit' do you mean play, Susie?" asked her grandmother. "You would n't wish to play *all* the time, dear?"

"If I had anybody to play with, if I had Danny," answered Sue. "He's gone to boarding-school. He thinks it's fine, but I think it's turrible."

"You will find pleasant little companions at Miss Leslie's, the nicest little girls in Waukego."

"I don't like little girls," said Susanna judicially. Then, afraid lest she had hurt her grandmother's feelings, she added, "I suppose it's because I'm so used to Danny."

The child had never before visited her grandmother by herself, but had hitherto had

in her train her mother and her nurse. She now gave out, "Nobody has to put me to bed. I just love to turn the electric light on and off."

Anna, nevertheless, waited upon the toilet of her niece. "I'll come for company," she said sociably, yet a little shyly. With an effort, she inquired, "Do you say your prayers, Susanna?" Anna had felt herself equal to the buttoning and unbuttoning of small garments, but not to the bedtime ministrations to the child's tender little soul.

"I do," Sue answered gayly, "when there's anybody to say them to. Sometimes mamma, sometimes papa, but Geraldine told me to hurry up so, I would n't say 'em."

"Could n't you say them all alone by yourself,—say them to God?" Anna whispered.

"No," said Sue. "You can't do that unless you're grown up. Shall I say 'em to you?"

Susanna dropped instantly her colloquial tone, and said "Our Father" like a little angel, and then repeated "Now I lay me." She had not arrived at any deep and dread

meanings of the little prayer; but after she had said it softly, felt that she was mysteriously in safe keeping for the night.

"Was there anything else?" whispered Anna. "Did you say 'God bless' anybody?"

"Oh, yes!" and Sue began again in a hushed, awed voice, "God bless papa, and God bless mamma, and God bless Danny,— and make us all well and good and happy forever and forever! Amen. But I don't see what good it will do *now*, Aunt Anna. Aunt Anna, do you see?"

Next day saw little Sue a happy pupil in Miss Leslie's boarding and day school for girls. The younger Miss Leslie received her, kissed her with a tender interest, and set her a pretty task. All went well for four days, and Susanna took to her heart several dear friends. On the fifth day the elder Miss Leslie returned from a recruiting tour in the farther West and held a conference with her sister about school affairs.

The result was that at the end of the week, Miss Leslie in person rang the door-bell at

Mrs. Glenn's house, and asked for an interview with Susanna's grandmother.

"You must see her, dear. This is one of my bad days. You must tell her that we are very much pleased, that we are entirely satisfied, and that our little Susanna is very happy. Be sure to tell her from me, with my kindest regards."

Anna wondered a little at the honor done their house. Miss Leslie usually gave audience to parents in an office hung about with *Madonnas*, where she sat with back to the light, and listened graciously to complaints. The *grande dame* was a phase of the elder Miss Leslie, and it was conspicuous on this occasion.

"It is the younger one I like," passed swiftly through Anna's mind, as she crossed the room. Miss Leslie received her hostess with some majesty. "I wonder if I dare sit down," thought Anna.

The visitor was most affable, as prelude to what she had to say. Anna was in lighter vein, but the two ladies got on amicably

enough, until the real business of the interview appeared.

"I have come upon a delicate errand, a very delicate errand, Miss Day. In my absence my sister has been at the head of the school."

"We appreciated your consideration in allowing Susanna to enter at this irregular season," said Anna.

"My sister did not consult me. I have no doubt she thought me at too great a distance. But there is always the telegraph, Miss Day."

Miss Leslie waited for Anna's assent, as was her manner in dealing with pupils in her office. "There is always the telegraph," she repeated impressively.

"The telegraph, of course," Anna echoed.

"I have to be very frank about it. My sister made a mistake. I have told her so. At least one of our parents has already told her so. Another has more than hinted it."

Miss Leslie paused ominously. "Is this about our little Susanna?" asked Anna gently.

"To the little girl herself there is not the slightest objection, you understand."

Anna said nothing.

"You know the families — the homes — represented in my school. You know the class of mothers — and the associations they demand for their children. We exercise the greatest care in the matter of race, for instance, oh, I assure you, the greatest care, and I am obliged to say it plainly, we have no children of divorced parents. I do not hold with my sister, who thinks we should have no hard and fast rule about either. I maintain less offense is given in the end by adhering to a rule. You must draw a line, and it is for the final interest of society that you should draw a line. Individuals have to suffer, the innocent with the guilty, — the innocent more than the guilty, I fear."

Anna grew pale, and bowed her head, — a case in point. "I cannot argue the matter," she said slowly. "It shall be as you wish, Miss Leslie."

"I thank you that you see it as you do,"

said that lady grandly. "I have not seen the little girl, but my sister tells me that she is an attractive child. There are other schools less — less —"

Anna bowed. She stood at the window as Miss Leslie took her departure, looking absent-ly after her, her mind concentrated on break-ing the dismissal to her mother and to Sue.

"Did you give Miss Leslie my message, Anna?" said Mrs. Glenn from her sofa. "I was very sorry not to see her."

"Mother, I must tell you the truth."

Mrs. Glenn listened, incredulous.

"I can't make out what you mean. She had n't room for her till the beginning of an-other year; her sister had made a mistake? She should have found out sooner that she had n't room."

She listened again, her face beginning to express dismay.

"Refuse a child from a family like ours! It is an insult. I regard it as an insult."

Anna, too, was quivering in her family pride. She had perceived that Miss Leslie felt

sorry for her. She must, however, find strength for her mother. "Miss Leslie has her point of view, mamma. She says the home from which the child comes is always the first thing that she considers."

"Does n't this child come from her grandmother's home? She has no other."

"We were told that Susanna was to live with Jessie when she came back from Europe."

"But the little friends she was making," said Mrs. Glenn piteously.

"Their mothers must decide that matter. Poor little Sue!"

"I consider it a personal insult," repeated Mrs. Glenn.

"The newspaper notoriety just at this moment Miss Leslie objected to. She could not have a child in her school who was an object of such unwholesome interest. She must have the atmosphere pure of all such matters. I see her point of view, I do, indeed. I believe I respect her courage; but it is hard on little Sue."

"It is hardest for me, of all people," and Mrs. Glenn abandoned herself to weeping.

If Anna found it difficult to convey Miss Leslie's edict to her mother, she found it still harder to set the matter before Susanna.

"*I am going to have a school,*" she announced that evening.

"Ho!" laughed Susanna.

"In my bay window, from ten to twelve. Reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, and geography will be taught."

"Ha!" Susanna laughed again.

"It is to be called the Summer School of Useful Knowledge."

"Oh, oh!"

"It begins to-morrow and ends the first week in August, just a three months' course."

Susanna began to understand and looked thoughtful.

"There will be afternoon excursions to parks and museums, and into the country. There will be lectures and readings and concerts downstairs in the library — there will be good times sprinkled all along. My prospectus reads well."

"Who's going to your school?" Sue's eyes sparkled.

"Who do you guess?"

"Me? Oh, yes, if Bessie Amory comes, too. But I'd rather," said Sue very slowly, reluctant to wound her aunt's feelings, — "I'd rather go to Miss Leslie's: we have such fun at recess."

Anna suffered. How be truthful, yet not tell the truth?

She said with that firmness that was her inheritance from her father, "Dear, if grandma and Aunt Anna both wished you to go to the little school in the bay window instead of to Miss Leslie's, would you be an obedient little girl and do what they asked you to?"

"But *why?*"

"And not ask *why*: that is being obedient."

"But I never shall *see* *why*; and that's just as bad."

CHAPTER VI

THE GILLESPIES

MRS. GILLESPIE was a short, broad and cheery old lady. She was of country birth and proclaimed it: "I 'm from Indiana, and I 'm not ashamed of it!" She had always maintained country ways in the Ohio town in which her son had begun his practice, and now in the city to which they had migrated, she nailed down her carpets, called the last meal of the day "supper," and ate in the kitchen whenever she found it convenient.

"In a Western city you can have a morning-glory at your back door, and you can hear a robin sing in your yard. They tell me you can't do that in New York," said Mrs. Gillespie. "I 'm glad Edward didn't go to any such place when he made up his mind he must try a city," she told her favorite sister-in-law. "Of course, I am contented to go

wherever he goes, but I don't feel just right in any place where I can't leave my front door open."

Mrs. Gillespie sat late in the afternoon, with her knitting in her hand. No "fancy" knitting hers, but a stout woolen stocking. It was one of those days such as the Lake towns know in May, a day of brilliant sunshine, but with a sharp tang in the air. An open wood fire blazed and shone in the sunny room. A pot of yellow daffodils lighted another corner, though mother Gillespie had never studied an æsthetic effect in her life. She had only a strong instinct for cheer. Her furniture was shabby, but hospitable. A chair stood just where it was easy to drop into it, and when you were seated, there you stayed. If you put out a hand you could reach a book. The real reader does not leave his seat, walk across the room and take a volume from behind glass doors. His book is at hand.

The pictures on the wall included a good landscape, bought on impulse by Dr. Gillespie, when he came to live in a city and first

saw a good picture. It was a genuine escapade, for he could not afford it; and his mother turned down the gas for a year to retrieve his folly. There was a crayon portrait of his father; there were photographs of college buildings, and a castle painted by Mrs. Gillespie in her young ladyhood.

The mantel ornaments were two candelabra with tinkling prisms, in which the sunlight was dancing. These had traveled from far New England; for, said Mrs. Gillespie, "My *parents* were from Massachusetts." The clock in the middle was flanked by two "images," as Mrs. Gillespie called the plaster casts which she had bought from a peddler because he was so thin. They happened to be charming reproductions of little Tanagra ladies. The clock itself kept scrupulous time, and struck with a gay staccato, but it was a clock that for looks had little to say for itself. Mrs. Gillespie, in fact, was an unrepentant Philistine. But again, in this house, objects in and out of taste somehow melted together and made home.

"Let us sit by the window, Cicero," said Mrs. Gillespie to the cat; "let us watch for your master." There stood a chair by the window always, and a chair by the fire. "There he is this minute! I am glad he rides in a sulky like his father before him, not in one of these terrible automobiles," she said, as the doctor entered.

He looked benignant and amused. "Mother, you're a humbug. You know the desire of your heart is to see me make my rounds in an automobile."

"Look at poor Dr. Gummere, run over the other day!"

"Poor old fellow! I've got two of his patients already."

Mrs. Gillespie smiled unscrupulously.

"An Amory child," said the doctor, taking up the poker, to remake his mother's fire. That neatly done, he leaned back in his chair, and studied the lady placidly knitting. She raised her keen eyes, and in turn examined him.

"Who was the second patient?" she asked.

"Do you remember that miserable story a few weeks ago of the pair who separated,—she was the daughter of Mrs. Marcus Glenn of this town."

"I remember something of the kind. That is n't the kind of news I pick out of the paper."

"Mrs. Glenn sent for me to-day."

"Ah!" said his mother briskly. "I have heard she is a chronic invalid and likely to live a long time. A rich widow, the very thing!"

Her son laughed and said nothing.

"Who did you see there?" asked his mother, too eager to use the objective case, though a former schoolmistress.

"Well, I had a long interview with Mrs. Glenn. She is very unlike you, mother."

"Fine lady, I presume. Nothing the matter with her, I presume likely, too."

"Well, if your daughter had quarreled with her husband in the public prints, it might give even you a sick headache."

"I've nothing to do with that variety. My

daughter never quarreled with her husband.
My son—”

“ You won’t hear my story, mother.”

“ Describe her looks.”

“ Her—looks?”

Mrs. Gillespie gave him a quick glance.
“ Were there two ladies?”

“ I suppose you would call Mrs. Glenn a rather pretty woman. She is in a nervous state, but she will come round. She ought to know you, mother.”

“ I should never intrude upon one of your patients. I have no wish to know them, but I am glad that you have made an entrance into fashionable society.”

“ Don’t be humble, mother. You know that’s all pride.”

“ I don’t know but I am too proud to associate with people who have divorces in their family. I may be countrified in my ideas, but it does seem to me in this age of the world it is something just to be respectable, and keep out of the newspapers. I am glad we have the moral courage to be dull and decent.”

"I should hardly describe you in that way, mother."

"Of course people who don't like decency and order call them conventionality and prejudice. I'm prepared for that. What has become of those children I read about in the paper?"

"Oh, you did read about it, eh? The little girl is with her grandmother. The boy is somewhere at school."

"Horrid children, I should imagine."

"I wonder," said Dr. Gillespie, looking into the fire.

"They naturally would be. That's part of the sin of their parents," said Mrs. Gillespie with energy.

"I wonder," her son repeated.

"You are a scientific man. You believe in heredity, don't you?"

"It's not so simple as that, mother," answered the scientific man cautiously.

"If they are nice children, it must be some very remote ancestor, then, that has done it. Did you see the poor little thing? What did she look like?"

"She seemed to have a large ribbon bow on her head. I think she never took her eyes off me, though she never spoke to me. She dropped me a curtsey when she came into her grandmother's room, that was all. I hated to send her off."

"Hm, a coquette already, but I pity the child. A cheerful sort of a grandmother to be shut up with. Is she to be left to servants to finish her education?"

"There is an aunt," said Dr. Gillespie deliberately.

"Eh?"

"Mrs. Glenn's daughter, Miss Day."

"That sounds like a plain, sensible person."

"Yes," said the doctor reluctantly, for this did not seem to portray Anna Day.

"A person of some character, let us hope."

"I'm sure of that."

His mother knit a round on her brown woolen stocking before she spoke again. "About how old is she?" Mrs. Gillespie inquired.

"Nine, her grandmother said."

“Pshaw, Ned, the aunt.”

“You can figure it out. She is the elder half-sister of the child’s mother.”

“In her thirties. Pretty to look at?”

“Don’t ask me. I had n’t five minutes’ conversation with her.”

“Half-sister; so she’s of a different stock from the other young woman.”

Mrs. Gillespie knit another round without speaking, and her son fell back in his chair and closed his eyes.

When he opened them, he said, “I did n’t tell you, mother, that while I have two of Dr. Gummere’s old patients and may have more, I have lost a whole family. They have gone over to the new cult. Wrote me a note that was a gem. You must have it.”

The sound that Mrs. Gillespie emitted must be regretfully described as a snort.

CHAPTER VII

BY CABLE FROM LONDON

ACHILLY May in the Lake city was followed by a balmy June. Nature was in her gentlest and sweetest mood after the wild northern winter and the ungenial springtime. In the families of the Warriners and Glenns the storms of the past three months had also subsided, and even, regular days succeeded each other from one week to another.

Dullness seems wholesome [wrote Anna to her friend Pauline]: days that one can't tell apart are grateful after dates that stand out. See how long I have lived: I dread having anything happen,—good or bad. I don't want stimulus; I want peace. I have taken to reading dull novels, and I almost enjoy dull people. I wonder if you would think our newest acquaintance dull,—the new doctor.

My mother likes him moderately, but does not feel him so sympathetic as Dr. Gummere. I think he does not find her case interesting, and she perceives that. It is Susanna who likes him immoderately, and he seems more at ease with her than with the rest of us. She has been riding round the town in his sulky without consulting her family, and has visited his mother, whom we have never met. I mean to get in a few notions about the conventions before the child returns to the society of the Jackmans. It is an aunt's business, from time immemorial, to teach propriety.

You ask about Susanna. There is a good deal *to* my little niece. There must have been a fine old great-great-grandmother, one or two of them, somewhere back in the past. Yet I always noticed that Jessie and Gilbert did not quarrel before the children, though they would quarrel before me. When the children were about, they turned their attention to them and were very decent sort of parents. Yet they would not treat each other

well for the sake of Dan and Sue. They had not a grain of foresight, or insight, or any kind of true sight. It was just blind and stupid, the whole business, and need never have happened, if there had only been a little more kindness and good nature. I shall never believe it would have reached such a crisis, if it had not been for those awful Jackmans. Jessie fell into bad company; that was the truth of it. People talk of bad company as if it were a danger only of lads in their teens,— dear me, anybody may fall into bad company! I could see my sister Jessie under the spell of “evil communications,” and I shall never forgive myself that I could n’t get her away. I did try hard; for one side of me loves one side of Jessie. I am thankful to say that part of her is all alive in dear little Sue.

Susanna pines for Danny. Those children made home for each other, wherever they were. There is elaborate provision for visits between them; but visits of a little brother and sister,— the mockery of it!

However, Susanna does n’t spend her time

in tears. She lives in the present, like all children. I suppose no child knows enough to be really unhappy. If she knew how she had been cheated ! Sometimes I think she does.

Her relation to other children has its difficulties. Bessie Amory's mother is plainly chary of visits, for fear of the influences under which Sue has been brought up,—so I heard it expressed in a similar case, rightly enough. Bess has had the whooping-cough, and that was conclusive, until naughty Sue took matters into her own hands, and without a word to us, set forth to visit Bess and catch her whooping-cough. She now enjoys the company of her friend, and apparently thinks it worth the price of the punishment we felt obliged to administer.

There is a smart set in Waukego, as there appears to be nowadays in the smallest towns. We are self-righteous enough to be glad we are not of it, though we might be said to have qualified lately. These people would make no objection to Sue's family history,—might rather think it lent her interest. There

is a fashionable school we may be driven to send her to.

I do what I can to mother her, but I have the forlorn feeling that she is lonely with me. Is it because years and years ago something went wrong with my heart, and it stopped unfolding as it should? I want so to have her love me dearly!

Susanna is now enjoying the attentions of Dr. Gillespie, having achieved the whooping-cough. She tries to show off her cough, of which she is very proud, and I like to watch his face as he watches hers.

I was grateful for your letter and your sympathy, but don't take us too hard. We have a period of peace till Jessie returns from Europe, which will be in the fall. You ask about Danny. He was dispatched to boarding school six weeks ago, and sends illiterate letters to his little sister, but dear letters, his aunt thinks. Writing to Danny is one of Sue's chief occupations.

Yes, it is wonderful how you can adjust yourself to anything. Life goes on, somehow.

Mother's nerves are better, with this new doctor.

Well, dear, it takes me as long a time to stop a letter as it does some people to end a call. Good-by! Your devoted

ANNA.

Writing to her friend had brought a smile to Anna's face. "Pauline is never anything but a happy thought, bless her!"

Still smiling to herself, Anna went about the house. She waited at the head of the stairs as the doorbell rang. "Bring it to me, Minna," she said with a full, joyous voice, as she caught sight of a yellow telegram.

Anna read the typewritten cable dispatch with one glance, and turned white. "Poor little Susanna! Poor mother!"

"Lunch is ready, ma'am," said Minna.

Anna thrust the telegram out of sight, and joined her mother at the lunch table.

After the meal was finished, Anna followed her mother to her room. "There is news from Jessie, mother."

“Is it an accident? Is it an automobile?”

“She is married.”

Mrs. Glenn shrieked, and fell back upon her sofa.

Anna read: “Married noon to-day Charlie Westlake. Please give approval.”

“‘Charlie’!” groaned the afflicted mother.

“He is undoubtedly all of that,” said Anna darkly.

“‘Please give approval’ — what *can* she mean by that?” moaned Mrs. Glenn.

“She’d like a telegram of congratulation.”

“I shall write her a letter and tell her she has broken my heart a second time.”

“Poor little Susanna!” was all Anna could say.

“Who is this ‘Charlie’?” Mrs. Glenn inquired, with tearful voice.

“One of the Jackman set; I’ve heard of him.”

“Will she be coming home? Will she be taking Susie away to live with her and that new husband? Shall I have to receive him as a son-in-law when I have Gilbert already?

Or was Gilbert divorced from all of us at the same time? My poor brain —" Mrs. Glenn put her hand to her gray pompadour.

Anna was sighing, "My little Susanna! What can I tell Susanna?"

"Don't ask me, don't ask me," said Mrs. Glenn from behind her handkerchief. "It's my heart again! Minna must telephone at once for Dr. Gillespie."

When, a few days after this, a letter came from Jessie, enclosing a tiny, fragrant note to Susanna, then Anna took her life in her hands, and told the truth to her little niece.

"Your mamma may not be at home very soon," she began. "She has gone for a long automobile journey through the Pyrenees."

"I wish I was going, too," said Sue comfortably. "I know where the Pyrenees Mountains are."

Anna spoke slowly and seriously: "Susanna, the law has decreed that your mother is no longer your father's wife. They were married, and now they are unmarried. Your mother has gone to England, and has mar-

ried somebody else." Her hideous duty done, Anna waited.

Susanna listened awe-struck. "I don't see how they *could*," said the puzzled child, and that was all that Susanna ever said about it.

"She took it very quietly," Anna reported to her mother. "But she is thinking about it; I can see it in her eyes. The harm has been done; her childhood is spoiled."

"Did she ask any questions?" inquired Mrs. Glenn, her interest aroused.

"No. She didn't ask his name. I wonder if the poor child guessed it. Yet she told me once she thought the Jackmans were lovely. This was Mrs. J.'s younger brother, I know as much as that."

When the maid raked the ashes from the fireplace next morning, she found among them a little gold ring set with a blue stone, and this she brought to Miss Anna.

"Why, Susanna, is n't this your ring?"

"I don't want it," said Sue, making up the ugliest face she knew how. "The one that

gave me that ring I hate the worst of anybody in this world."

Anna tossed it into the coal hod. She drew little Susanna to her, and the child put her arms round her aunt's neck as if for shelter.

"Where is my home now?" asked Susanna squarely.

"Right here, till somebody tears you away from us, dear."

"I won't go," said Susanna, planting her feet firmly. "But where does the furniture stay?"

"Do you love the furniture?"

"Partly I do," answered Sue, after thinking.

"I understand," said Anna. "I felt that way when I went away to college, homesick for tables and chairs. You will go to college some day."

"I shall go to the same one Danny goes to. We said so."

"A little co-ed? Well, well, we'll see."

"Ah, ha!" said Dr. Gillespie, as he looked at his evening paper. "Now I understand,

mother. I was called to Mrs. Glenn this afternoon: here is the notice of her daughter's remarriage in London. Poor lady!"

"That daughter? Well, I need n't express my views."

"I ought to help Mrs. Glenn. I ought to help her daughter."

"You mean the other? I should hope you 'd have nothing to do with the ogling one."

The doctor laughed. "How do you know, mother?"

"I don't have to see her. My sympathies are with the husband,—*any* of her husbands."

"I wish you knew the family. You would do them more good than I can. It is not medicine they need."

"They'd better take to the New Life," said Mrs. Gillespie scornfully.

"I've half a mind to recommend it to Mrs. Glenn. It would n't answer for the daughter."

"It would be just like you, boy, to get rid of one of your best patients and then make a joke of it. Don't say a word to her about Mind; but give her some good, strong, dark-colored

medicine that will make her believe in you."

"Mother, you are an unscrupulous old party."

"How does the half-sister take this piece of news? She must be glad it's a half; and that's bad enough."

"I hardly know. She kept Susanna by her side, that was all I noticed,—had hold of the child's hand. I can't say I know Miss Day. She is under a strain, just at the point where she is determined not to break down. She'll pull through; she has a good physique."

"You will help her," said his mother sincerely, without raillery. And then added mysteriously, "Don't tell me!"

CHAPTER VIII

HIGH TOP

SIX weeks before the news came from London, Gilbert Warriner left his office early one day to put his little boy upon the train for High Top. He had visited the school with the lad, and inquired of him now if he should be afraid to travel there alone. "I can't well spare a day off so soon again."

Dan scorned being taken care of, and grew taller by an inch when intrusted with ticket and check. Father and son stood by the waiting train, ready to go on board at the last possible moment, with masculine serenity.

"Porter, be good to this little chap," said Warriner, slipping something green into a black hand. "Get him off all right at High Top station."

Danny felt important, and looked down at his new clothes.

"All aboard! All aboard!" the cry ran along the train. "*All* aboard!"

Warriner took the cigar from his mouth, kissed his little boy, and put back his cigar with care.

“Brace up, old man,” he said, as Danny was unable to speak. “All aboard!”

The boy scrambled to the window, and looked eagerly for his father, who stood smiling and waving his hand. The train began to move, the little face slipped away, and the man walked up the platform, with darkening countenance. He looked straight ahead, and refused to catch the eye of an old acquaintance. In a world where the great relations had gone wrong, what mattered the trivial amenities!

Danny turned round and cried, — oh, how he cried!

Two ladies, in chairs opposite, looked at each other in dismay. “What are we to do? We can’t let a child cry like that, Emily, and do nothing to comfort him?”

“I’d wait a little, Jane. He will feel better if we take no notice of him.”

“What ails the little beggar?” asked Emily’s husband.

"He is probably going away from home for the first time; leaving his mother, no doubt."

Emily's husband was inclined to a humorous view, which increased Miss Jane's distress. "I feel as if I must speak to the child," she said.

"Tell him to stop his howling," said the unfeeling Mr. Holladay.

Jane spoke gently to the little boy, and he cried the louder. Then came the colored porter down the aisle, with a friendly eye fixed on Danny. Dan looked up at him frightened, then interested, and at last the boy smiled sheepishly.

"Guess you'se feelin' better," said the porter, who understood "suggestion." "Your par said as you was to go into the dinin' car 'bout noon. It's gettin' towards that pretty fast."

This simple remedy worked better than all Jane's tenderness. "They understand children," said Emily, who was an active friend of the colored race. "See those two talking to-

gether now. What a relief to hear the boy laugh! Now, Jane, you can enjoy your book."

But Jane's eyes were upon Danny. "You don't suppose he is bound for High Top, and likely to be schoolfellow of my godson, Billy Holladay?"

"As soon as he has had his dinner, we will make friends with him," said the mother of Billy. "He ought to have the fun of the dining-car all to himself."

The party arrived at High Top in excellent spirits, and the best of friends.

"Yet I cannot make out his family," said Jane to Emily, as they left Danny in the hands of the Head Master. "I naturally asked him about his mother. There is something queer. I asked him where his home was. He said he was *staying*. Good gracious! has it come to this, that you must ask no question, even of a child, to which you don't know the answer?" Jane was thoughtful. "Emily, I have made a discovery. That is the same boy we saw at the hotel with his little sister. You know what we heard about them?"

"I know you called them twentieth-century orphans."

"Oh, come now, you women, don't be sentimental about that boy. It will make a man of him, to throw him out on his own resources. Look at our Billy."

"It's a very different case, Mr. Holladay," said his wife Emily.

Danny was at this moment trying to acquit himself like a man, and was succeeding pretty well. Everybody was kind to him. The Head Master was a little extra kind, had Danny but known it.

The new boy was then passed on to the House Mother of the smallest boys, and the House Mother proved true to her comfortable name. Mrs. Balls had a drop of Irish blood in her veins. Danny looked up at her ample person, and answered respectfully and gratefully to her pleasant welcome. The little boy felt altogether good and at peace in these first hours of High Top. He had arrived at sunset of a long May day, and High Top was springing into tender green beauty on every side.

The House Mother, too, was extra kind to this little boy. When he asked excitedly, "Does—does Billy Holladay stay in this house?" she answered with a sympathetic clap on the shoulder, "That he does. You 'll like him ; he 's the sort you do like." She hailed a boy, and bade him show Master Warriner Room Number 15. It proved to be a plain, small room, with a number on the door. It was that number that Danny fancied most about it : that made him feel like grown people who go to hotels.

"These are the barracks," said the old boy. "Most folks' mothers fix 'em up," and he threw his head comprehensively in the direction of open doors, which showed vistas of posters, banners, and sofa pillows. "Each feller 's got his own room. We wish we had n't."

Dan was a tolerably good and happy schoolboy by the end of six weeks. He was a trifle brighter than the average, and had soon the consolations of vanity. Discipline for vanity was, however, administered by his schoolfellows, till he learned better to conceal it.

Boasting to an unsympathetic older boy Daniel found to be a quite different matter from bragging to an admiring and believing younger sister.

Dan behaved in the field so as to command respect; indeed, he stood very well with his school-fellows, in spite of unquestionably high marks and a disposition to read whenever he had a chance.

High Top School was manned by excellent teachers, most of them with a vocation; they "liked their job," as a rule. These young men were informed of Danny's brief experience of life, and set about doing their best for the little lad. Social service, one called it,—rescuing dependent children; do it as well here as in the slums.

There was earnest consideration of each pupil in the confidential teachers' meeting held once a week. Not a little of the spirit of Arnold of Rugby lived on in these young American schoolmasters.

When Daniel Warriner's name was reached in alphabetical order, the Master paused.

“This child is a rather peculiar case,” he said reluctantly; “we must give him special care. He has practically no home but this. You are aware, perhaps, of the circumstances. The home influences have been removed. There are those in our day who believe with Plato that that is for the best. The State—for the time being the School—can do the work better than the parent. I am not of that way of thinking. Nothing can take the place of the family life in the education of the child, nothing.”

The assistant Head Master, who sat at his right hand, read books of the day which led him to argue respectfully, that it was often better to remove a boy or a girl from home influences, homes being at present what they are.

“Many homes being yet so imperfect,” the Head Master assented; and was tempted into quotation, saying fervently, “Good homes throughout the earth being, as I believe, that far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves.” The Head Master looked at the

assistant, whom he suspected of socialistic tendencies. The young man, however, was struggling with a blush. "Yet I am prepared to say," continued the Master, "that a poor home is better than no home at all in its forming of character. Well, well," he said, returning to his list of boys, "the facts are what they are, and we must proceed from them. The thing is to make of this boy such a man as will not repeat this history. His own childhood is marred irrevocably. Let us try to stop the evil with this generation. I talked with the father, a pleasant fellow, with a good eye. But I can see he is glad to shift his responsibility, get somebody else to do his duty for him. *However*," said the Master with a smile, "I am not prepared to say that, given the present circumstances, he is not doing the best for the boy in sending him to High Top. In fact, I commend his judgment," said he genially. "How does the boy stand in mathematics, Mr. Johnson?"

At the awful risk of being called Baby Danny, our little boy sought the society of

the House Mother. Plumpness of person attracts children, and if Danny had had to say why he first liked the House Mother, the truth would have been because she had no visible or imaginable bones, and had round, pink cheeks at forty. He had not much to say to his new friend, but liked to sit around in her presence. He was delighted if she noticed him, with, "Off with you to the seamstress' room and get that button sewed on your jacket, or I'll give you a cuff and a kiss. Run with you!"

Or when the House Mother came into his room at night, and turned the light out, then Danny was disappointed if she forgot to stroke down the coverlet, and say, "Don't you lose time gettin' off to sleep, little Mr. Boy." Yet the House Mother would softly say to her companion, as they went their nine o'clock rounds, "Now's the time they want their mothers. I lost my little boy, but I would n't have missed those eight years. I'd have given my life for those eight years. It's this time o' night makes me think of him."

Danny had a complete little daily life ; he went to business as regularly as his father did, at half-past eight in the morning. With equal regularity he attended to play in the afternoon, and he never failed at meals. Usually, it was a busy and a happy little life ; but there were some bad days, as when once the boys fell to bragging of achievements of their parents.

“ My father 's been up Pike's Peak.”

“ My father went to a higher mountain than Pike's Peak last summer, but I can't remember the name.”

“ Did he climb it ? ” asked a doubter.

“ No—o ; but it would have been higher if he had climbed it,” said the little disciple of Plato, in his filial piety.

“ My father and mother took me to Switzerland with 'em. Mountains, *I've* seen mountains.” This boy represented Switzerland as a country where one could with difficulty keep a foothold.

Danny tried to think how he could beat this, and gave it up.

"My father and mother always take me round with them, do yours?" the other boy wanted to know.

"Sometimes," said Danny. "I've been to—" but the other boy was eager to tell his own adventures.

"I'm going this summer to Alaska. Where are you going this summer?" he did inquire, in order to set off Alaska.

"I don't know," answered Dan, wondering for the first time.

"Have you got a home in the country?"

"No."

"Do your folks stay in the city?" said this inquisitive boy.

"I guess so," said helpless Danny.

"What do you do that for? Does your mother like it?"

"She does n't stay."

"What do you do, then?"

"I stay with my father."

"That's funny. Where does he stay?"

"I don't know," said Danny, gathering himself together for retaliation. "I wish you'd

mind your business," he said angrily; "you've got too many questions to ask." This was a very stupid answer, for the tormentor was heard saying immediately, "That chap's parents are alive, but he's lost 'em on the way," which he took for wit.

"I asked him what his father did," said another of the little gossips. "He would n't tell. He said, 'That's my own business.' I know what — I guess he's a liquor dealer."

"Saloon-keeper, I guess," said the other boy. This was delivered purposely in Dan's hearing, — talking about another boy while you ignore his presence being a favorite form of insult.

Dan walked up to his persecutor and roared at him, "He's a architect! Don't you say he's a saloon-keeper!"

"Fight! Fight!"

There were two black eyes, and one nose-bleed, which obliged the tormentor of Dan to retire to the nearest faucet.

"Good for you, Dan!" said his friend Billy Holladay, walking away with the victor in

manly fashion, arm in arm. "But he ain't got any muscle ; he 's a mushy fellow."

This was the beginning of a feud, in which Dan, alas, did his full share, though the other boy, having an ugly little mug to begin with, excelled Dan in making up faces. His masterpiece would have done for a study of a young gargoyle. This naughty boy had great skill in dodging the House Mother. In vain she fixed a stern eye upon him: he met it with an eye of mock sternness. All unbeknown to her, he regularly obtained through the garbage man for ten cents of precious pocket money a lurid Sunday paper. This he shared with boon companions in the shrubbery, while the Head Master, all unconscious, was taking a well-earned Sunday nap, and the assistant Head Master was gone courting.

"Gee-whiz ! See what I got here ! Ain't she a beaut ?" cried Dan's enemy. "That 's his mother ! Listen to it : 'Beautiful di-vorcee weds in London.' How do you pronounce that word ? "

"Search me!" said the other boy. "I dare you to show him that picture."

"You bet I will. Where is he now?"

"He'll have your liver and your lights."

This was their choicest piece of alliteration.

"I'm goin' for him straight."

At the supper-table an hour later, the boys were talking about the fight. "There was such a row they had to put 'em both to bed," they snickered; "such a row it took the House Mother and Jimmy both to separate 'em. Wish I'd been there. Jimmy's lookin' grim at us."

A very unpleasant episode of a calm Sabbath afternoon, Mr. James Smithers was thinking. He had got to the bottom of the trouble, and was heartsick at the whole business of trying to make "Christian gentlemen" out of such stuff as Bobby Nicholson and his admirers.

The House Mother's kind face was clouded. She left the table before the rest, and stole up to Danny's door. All was still. "He's asleep,"

she said to herself. "I'll let his supper wait a little."

A half hour later she came again, and this time she tried the door. "Danny, my little boy, my little boy!" There was no Danny in the room.

"Mr. Smithers, come quick!" and she knocked hard upon the teacher's door. "Oh, come quick! I read in the paper only last week how a little boy went back and forth between his parents and pleaded that they'd make it up, and they would n't, and then he went and drownded himself. That was a true case, Mr. Smithers, the names were all given. Oh, quick!"

"Oh, pshaw, Mrs. Balls, Dan has more grit."

"He has taken his traveling-bag; that gives me hope."

"Probably gone home — gone to his father, that is. Had he any money?"

"'T was this very day he told me he had just thirty-five cents. He spends too much at the candy woman's."

"Then he 's footed it, and there 's only one

road south. I tell you what I 'll do, mother Balls. You put on your bonnet, and I 'll borrow our neighbor Wegg's automobile. We will catch up with that boy, and we 'll keep quiet about it, don't you say so? We don't want this sort of thing, for the credit of the school."

In less than half an hour the searchlight of the motor car "picked up" a little dark figure upon the level white country road. It tried to get into a shadow; but there were no shadows. The boy could only turn his back, so that the strangers should not see his face.

"It 's him. Thank the Lord! *Danny!*!" Mr. James Smithers turned away and gave a manly cough. Daniel was the first to recover himself. He took up his hand-bag once more.

"I am going to my father. I did n't have money enough to buy a ticket, but I can walk very well."

"Now, Danny, you know that is n't any way for a boy to talk," said Mrs. Balls. "You

just get in and have a nice ride home in this automobile."

"I shan't stay there. I shan't go back there. You can't make me."

"Would you rather go to another school?" Mr. Smithers inquired kindly. "They are all very much alike—a few bad boys, a great many pretty good boys, and some fine fellows. Now there are more fine fellows at High Top than in any school I know."

The little boy still stood in the road, examining the automobile, irresistible machine, more persuasive than Mr. Smithers. "I give you my word," said the young master, as if addressing another man, "you can't do better than High Top, if it's a question of school. You don't propose to stay at home, I take it?"

Daniel looked up miserably at the master when he asked this question. It was a forlorn little figure that stood out on the lonely road, wrestling with fate.

"The most sensible thing you could do, Dan, would be to take a ride back in Mr.

Wegg's automobile. There won't a boy in school know about this. If you want to please your father, you 'll do it. He won't be glad to see you, I 'll tell you that. I 'm talking sense to you, Dan. Be a man."

The House Mother, for her part, could not go beyond tenderness ; she left it to her supporter to talk sense.

"You 've had no supper," she said, in a melting voice. "Come home and have some supper, with orange marmalade, Danny. Come, have a good ride home, and forget it every bit. There 's always tormenting boys and they grow to be tormenting men, but I wouldn't be driven before either, not if I was a boy, and not if I was a woman. You 've just to let them be, and they 'll torment themselves the worst. Come, Danny, I 've got a blanket to wrap you warm."

And Danny came.

CHAPTER IX

THE POSTMAN'S BAG — 1902

Pauline Esterbrook to Anna Day

DEAR ANNA, — Pray be more specific as to the “dullness” of Dr. Gillespie. Who, for example, calls him dull? Much depends upon that. Is he a dull writer? Most people are. A dull talker? Never mind that. A dull reader? That would be serious. A dull listener? Fatal! Does he *look* dull? Heaven forbid!

Tell me always about Jessie and the children. I am not likely to gossip about them. Such stories have a strange interest for us women who have not tried the great experiment. For myself, I am content; like Thoreau, I love my life to the rind and core. It has made of me all that I am capable of being. Indeed, I think it has made me surpass myself. I am not half what these college girls believe me, and yet I have my moments of

rising to it. I love my cloister, my cap and gown; I love the aroma of libraries, "and all the sweet serenity of books." But while this life of the modern nun is altogether delightful to me, while I glory in being a blue-stocking, this is not the life for you, Anna.

I wish to hear more of Susanna and her brother. I quite agree with you that they have been swindled. Yet the majority of children in such cases are far worse off. Susanna with you, and Dan at High Top,—rather the best luck *les pauvres petits* could have had, if the home had to go. What an ugly subject: failure and disappointment in that which it is greatest to succeed in! I am sorry you must have your thoughts so filled with it. That is a good phrase: "the expulsive power of the mind." Try it. Forget about Jessie, and think about somebody else. Write soon again, and answer my questions. What are you reading at present? Be sure to tell me.

PAULINE.

Anna to Pauline

MY DEAR PAULINE, — There are times when you cannot read, my beloved scholar, — times when even novels are impossible: the coincidences are unbearable. With my mind full of Jessie, every novel I take up is a study of an unhappy marriage, and the last one contained five, nicely differentiated. It is the same with the theatre. Your content with your lot, my dear, is more than justified by the novels and plays of the day.

I believe I have done with novels for the present. I will none of novels of business, novels of religion, novels of divorce. Therefore I have taken to reading some gentle essays, — gentle and sparkling, too, — a book that Dr. Gillespie lent me, since you are so much interested in him. The newspaper read aloud to my mother, and certain lugubrious magazine stories, — gems of art, however, — that is about the sum of my intellectual life.

You are quite right about "expelling" Jessie, at least for a time. (You see I am going

backwards through your letter, which is the best way really to answer, I have found.)

I am glad, Pauline, that you have taken up Dan and Sue. You shall hear more of them. When you visit me after Commencement, I will introduce them both to you. I feel quite easy about Dan. He is in a school where great care is taken to guard boys from evil companionship. We feel assured that Dan's associations are as good as they could be, and we are pleased with his friendship with Billy Holladay, one of your Holladays that I have heard so much about. Yet, I would far rather tie a boy of eleven to my own apron strings, if I were his mother.

As to introspection and analysis, I take your advice to heart. I ought to consume my own smoke, but the luxury of such a friend is a temptation, and I go on and thresh out my cares.

Did you know that I have become a teacher, too? If it were not that Susanna has such an inquiring mind that she does most of the teaching herself, I am sure I should be a fail-

ure. I serve for organization, and that seems to be rather necessary. I go by the clock, and I ring bells, and I call upon the class to rise and recite, and all this play delights Sue, and makes the real task go off. Occasionally, I think it fun myself, but the routine is irksome, I admit. I wish I did not have to teach Susanna, but there is no money for a governess, and Sue is a bright little ignoramus.

Yes, dear, I have plenty of things to take me out of myself, though I never liked the phrase: "yourself" ought to be the most delightful spot on earth. I went coldly into philanthropy to see if I could not cheer myself by cheering somebody else. I wonder how many half-happy women are doing that! It is one of the coincidences that several months ago I was put on our Club committee for the care of dependent children. Now Sue and Dan have brought that subject home to me. A large proportion of children we try to care for are from broken-up homes, that might have been kept together with just a little more intelligence and a little more kindness.

For further distraction we are to have a visit from my mother's old friend, Mrs. Meserole. She has taken vehemently to the new cult, I hear. I wonder if she is a propagandist.

A visit that will be difficult for us is Gilbert's to his little daughter, to take place soon. Have I told you that Jessie is remarried?—to a man of that Jackman set that she ran about so much with.

Come as soon as Commencement is over. I am sorry I cannot be at the reunion, but I could not possibly leave home now. Yet I am down on the class list with no perceptible occupation. Don't tell them more than you can help: our troubles need not sound so far away as that.

Your faithful friend,

ANNA.

Anna to Pauline

DEAREST PAULINE,—We are all happy that you are coming June 18. Mamma and Mrs. Meserole are deep in conversation, but

mamma stops to say, " Give dear Pauline my *kindest* love. We expect a *long* visit from her."

Mrs. Meserole is one of the most cheerful and amiable people you ever saw. I have to confess she is very much improved by the New Life, as she calls it, — which appears to me no name at all, or rather the universal name for all religions or for all grand passions. However, the results in this case are admirable; and dear mamma is drinking in Mrs. Meserole's philosophy. Where we shall all bring up I do not know.

Gilbert was here yesterday. It was an immense help to have Mrs. Meserole present, with her pleasant remarks on every possible subject. I saw Bert a few minutes alone. " Well," he said, " let Jess be happy if she can. I wash my hands of her. She's a fool, though, to marry that fellow, I can tell her that. How much does Sukey know? " " I told her," I said. " Pretty job! " was all Bert had to say. He does not look well. Still, I will not be sentimental about his side of the

business. He was quite enough to blame. My mother, for Sue's sake, invites him to our table, but she says she wishes she might never see him again. Oh dear, there is a Mrs. Jewell, a divorcée, we hear. We had not thought it of Bert.

I have become acquainted lately with a vivacious old lady, who happens to be the mother of our new doctor. We met on the Dependent Children's Committee. I shall see that you meet her.

June 18, then, happy June 18! I shall be at the six-thirty train. Blue hat with a white wing.

ANNA.

Daniel to Susanna

DEAR SUKEY,—I have had the pink eye; first they thought it was the whooping-cough, then measles, then pink eye—witch it was. 10 boys had it so we couldent study. It was great—you better kech it.

I got A in mathematics, witch is arithmetic, I spose you know. I didden get so

good in English. He made me copy my paper 3 times. They sent my report to papa to sign by mail and he answered back right across the page, make him spell and the master showed it to me and he said my father was just right. I had B in the rest of the things and one was B + Does Aunt Anna give you marks? It must be funny to go to a 1 girl school. My new friend is Billy Holladay. That's a nice name — makes you think of Christmas all the year. Thats what the boys call him, and 4th of July and all the rest. Hullo, old Thanksgivin they say. They keep askin me how I like the lions den. I genrally dont answer. I got very well acquainted with Billy's parents when I was traveling up here and a lady that was his godmother. What's that? The House Mother is another kind. There's stepmothers, too. I know a boy that's got one. The house mother's all right. I got a great long fold up postal card of mountains from mamma. What did you get?

Whats that thing you said you went riding

round in? Whose that Bessie? I dont spose you miss me. Vacations in three weeks. Then papa and I are going to board out in the country near by Chicago. I never boarded but once and then I had lots to eat.

Your aff brother

DANIEL B. WARRINER.

Susanna to Daniel

DEAR DANNY,—I had the whooping-cough, which is much worse than pink-eye. Aunt Anna said I nearly strangled, and I was black in the face severial times. Aunt Anna gives marks just as if I was in college she says. She puts them on the blackboard every week, and then in a little book with a red cover. She says we might as well have the fun of keeping score. Billy Holladay is a very nice name. A boy ought to be nice to go with it and not a swearin boy. A godmother is to help your mother to make you good, thats what its for, and to love you most as much. I asked Aunt Anna. We havent got any, because we wernt Piscolapalians. I never heard

of a house mother before in all my life. I should think it was very much like the Old Woman that lived in the Shoe, with twenty-five boys. Grandma says she pities her, whoever she may be. I ride in a sulky — s-u-l-k-y, but that word isent a good one, for really and truly it is nice and bright and shiny. My friend that I ride with is very tall, six feet and a quarter of an inch over, his mother says.

Your loving

SUKEY.

CHAPTER X

THE NEW LIFE

MRS. MESEROLE was an evangelist, and under her influence, her friend experienced religion for the first time in her life. Mrs. Glenn's guest was a zealot, and had planned her visit that she might "help" that unfortunate invalid. She accomplished her mission, and left Mrs. Glenn a convert to the New Life. The two women kissed tenderly at parting, and whispered mystical words each to the other.

Anna stood tenderly over her mother, and by force of habit drew her back from out the draft. But drafts no longer existed for Mrs. Glenn. She looked patiently and pityingly at her daughter, who looked patiently and pityingly at her. And that was the attitude that they maintained toward each other from that hour. "Throw away those bottles, dear," said Mrs. Glenn, with her new smile. Anna, be-

tween pleasure and dismay, put the bottles out of sight. It was a violent piece of adjustment for her to begin to live with a quite new mother, in fact, with a converted mother. Conversion had been supposed to have taken place in her youth ; and Roberta Glenn had been for many years a member in good and regular standing of the Old West Church. Yet she was a woman who had wholly failed to enter into the spiritual life. Her friend, in long and cloudy conversations, had, nevertheless, somehow succeeded in conveying to her its secret,—the mystery of the Presence of God, which is religion. This was the very secret that the excellent pastor of the West Church had been laboring to disclose to his parishioners. He had not had the opportunity, the access to the soul of his charge, which day by day her intimate guest had enjoyed. Mrs. Meserole had sat with her friend, and had instructed her in the practice of the religious life. The good minister, in his distant pulpit, had failed to reach the soul of his listener ; but Mrs. Meserole, in language which she

thought she understood, delivered to her friend a message which Mrs. Glenn thought she understood, and though in this groping way, her soul did indeed enter into a new relation with its Maker. Mrs. Glenn was an honest person, and she had never supposed that she was as religious as some people. Now for the first time she accepted the great assurance that the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. All the years of his pastorate the minister of the Old West Church had been telling his flock this truth; but it was just what they expected to hear from him, and it had never deeply fixed the attention of a mind like Mrs. Glenn's. It had belonged with gilded organ pipes and chairs with Gothic backs.

When Mrs. Glenn's friend led her to the books which should minister to this new spiritual life, one of them was the Bible. Mrs. Glenn had always kept by her a copy of the Scriptures in small type and expensive binding, carried it with her when she traveled, and had it always in sight, in order to give

herself the feeling that she read it,—which she seldom did, except when there was a death in the family. Mrs. Meserole instituted a Bible of comfortable type and attractive page, and inspired her friend to read and study and live by it. There dawned peace and consolation upon the saddened and bewildered mind of the invalid. It is true, her pastor had many a time assured his people with every form of persuasion that the more they read their Bibles, the better men and women would they be. Mrs. Glenn had listened politely, and had gone home to the Sunday paper.

Mrs. Meserole, though a talkative person, had lately acquired for herself something of the lost art of silence and meditation. She imparted it to Mrs. Glenn, who now closeted herself daily, and calmed and steadied herself for the day, precisely as her faithful minister had directed her to do.

Mrs. Glenn had not been an energetic church-goer, even before ill-health had excused her. Now she became indefatigable in

attendance upon the services of the New Life, and came home with face illumined.

On the day after Mrs. Meserole's departure Pauline arrived. She regretted in all sincerity that she had not met Mrs. Meserole.

"The dear lady made no attempt upon me," said Anna. "She only looked at me with exasperating forbearance."

"Your mother is really better?"

"Immensely improved in health and spirits. She was the very subject for this new religion, that I don't deny. However, when it comes to taking my dear mother's expensive bifocal glasses, and snapping them in two, to leave her peering about, and holding things at arm's length! Fortunately, we keep a powerful magnifying glass on the library table. Mother is happy and quiet, and we are all very comfortable. I am glad of anything that brings peace to poor distracted humanity."

Pauline was not ready to let it go at that; she argued that truth was better than tranquillity. Anna quoted Bacon, "A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Glenn's pleasantness shed itself over the household. Little girls' noise no longer disturbed Susanna's grandmother; the servants were gently chid; and Mrs. Glenn's affectionate nagging of her daughter was changed to affectionate purring.

"Oh, this is delightful, to have mamma so well," said Anna out of pure relief.

"But Anna, where does Dr. Gillespie come in, in this new scheme of the universe?"

Anna's expression was inscrutable, even to her friend's keen eye. "The singular thing is," she answered, "the unjust thing is, that the cure had really begun before Mrs. Meserole had arrived on the scene. He was healing her poor nerves by much the same principles. The best of it was all contained in his practice, as the best of the religion was all contained in the practice of the old. And yet they imagine it something new!"

"Dr. Gillespie is what you call a strong personality, I suppose?"

"You will see him."

"How see him if your mother has cast him off?"

"She has not quite done that yet. In fact, she has grown to like him."

"Have you grown to like him?"

"Yes," answered Anna composedly. "And his mother, too."

"Well, it's not a bad idea to begin at that end," said Pauline. "Yet it is a little hard that society is so feminized, that a man is so barricaded by his female relatives, you are so lunched and tea-ed by the women of the family, that you don't get half a dozen words with the man you want to see. Too bad that after the dancing days are over, it is all left to chance meetings and remote accidents, unless you belong to the regularly organized dinner-giving regiment of society."

"We did belong to it before my mother became an invalid. Since then, my society has been the American woman's daylight world, into which a reluctant man is dragged now and then. I own, Pauline, I get tired of women, all but you."

"You must have found a man like Dr. Gillespie rather a godsend."

"I am past teasing, Pauline," said Anna composedly. "You need not try it with a person of my years. Here comes mamma to protect me."

Mrs. Glenn bore in her hand a delicately wrapped parcel. "See this pretty token which Lizzie Meserole has sent me," and she disclosed a heavy silver spoon. A metaphysical legend ran along the handle, and a portrait adorned the bowl. "It is the memorial spoon of the New Life," said Mrs. Glenn softly.

"Shall you *eat* with it, dear mamma, in the face of that inscription?"

"I wish you were able to grasp its meaning, dear."

"I do grasp that you sleep better than you have for years, mother," said Anna heartily.

"What I wanted to speak to you about was this, Anna: it is nothing that Pauline may not hear."

Pauline turned her face respectfully towards Mrs. Glenn. She was glad to be able to observe at close range a phenomenon of her time. Her impartial intellectual curiosity

looked almost like sympathy, for which Mrs. Glenn was hungering.

"It is a little difficult, what I have to do, and I shall depend on you, Anna." Pauline thought swiftly of the leopard and his spots.

"I want you should tell Dr. Gillespie that he need not come to this house any longer. I like Dr. Gillespie, but of course you know now I do not depend on such help."

"But mother, he always did you good, whatever his medicines did, and they were very few. You were always better after his visits."

"With my change of thought, it would be impossible. His presence would hinder me."

"But why formally dismiss him, mother? He is our family physician, is n't he? What if Susanna should have the measles?"

"If she should have the belief of measles, we have a better way."

"Children should be protected from experiments, mamma. Or I myself. I no more propose to be ill than you do, and I entirely agree with you that it depends largely upon my own care of myself and my will to be

well; but why say anything to Dr. Gillespie at present? He knows that you are better; he told me the last time he was here that you might soon be a perfectly well woman."

Mrs. Glenn looked at her daughter blandly and patiently. "That has nothing to do with it, dear. Will you write to him, or perhaps it would be better to go to his office and explain it."

"I am ashamed to do it, mamma. You never had a doctor that did you so much good. If you talk about suggestion, what else was his whole visit to you but a suggestion of health,—he fairly insinuated health with every word and every tone of his voice. You were getting back to your old self, and now just as he is beginning to accomplish something, you throw him over. It is ungrateful, mamma."

"You seem to be a great champion of Dr. Gillespie," said Mrs. Glenn, with gentle curiosity.

Anna walked across the room excitedly. "I do hate to see a man shabbily treated.

Especially a man of his — dignity," she concluded to say, instead of *goodness*.

Pauline transferred her attention from Mrs. Glenn to Anna.

"Why, my dear, you get quite red about it," said Anna's mother mildly. "I suppose I could write myself, but it is rather an effort."

"Mother," Anna coaxed, "wait a little. Don't break off with Dr. Gillespie until you are sure you don't need him."

Mrs. Glenn's face expressed adamantine sweetness.

"It will be humiliating to have to call him back. And we shall surely have to — him or somebody else."

"Ah, how little you understand. You live in fear, in apprehension. I am free."

"Now, mother dear, I understand well enough what you mean, and it is half true. Let's agree to that. But never shall you make me promise not to call Dr. Gillespie if I see the need." Then Anna, who was not given to weeping, burst into tears. Her mother softly left the room.

Anna recovered herself shamefacedly. "Talk about nerves, I'm not very proud of my own."

"You'd better have Dr. Gillespie prescribe for you."

"He has: advised, that is; but how is one to follow advice to do impossible things, — to go away, to get a change — to rest — to — *He* was a rest and change — all I had. And your visit, Pauline." Pauline pressed her friend's hand, and Anna, strengthened, pulled herself up quickly. "Nonsense, I'm pitying myself, and that's the most contemptible frame of mind I know. Don't you ever let me do it, Pauline."

"Anna, here is some advice from me. Let your mother's case rest. Accept it, and take the comfort of her restored nerves."

"What of Dr. Gillespie?"

"Describe to him Mrs. Meserole's visit, — you can do it with a touch."

Anna shook her head. She might give Mrs. Meserole a "touch," but not her own poor mother. "Must I go to his office, and tell him he is turned out of this house? It amounts to

that. He is a poor man, too, as yet. I begin to have some feeling for 'well-to-do' people who have money cares. I have always had compassion on 'the poor.' There is his mother — there is an orphan niece he is educating — Mrs. Gillespie told me. My mother has had a yearly doctor's bill of at least a thousand dollars. Though we may save that, I foresee new expenses."

"Don't *foresee*. I am joining your mother!" said Pauline gayly. "All that I foresee is happiness!"

CHAPTER XI

OPINIONS OF MRS. GILLESPIE

WHAT do you say to a drive, mother? Have you had any fresh air to-day?"

Mrs. Gillespie never enjoyed her son's society more than when she had him securely to herself in his sulky, beyond doorbell and telephone. Therefore she trotted with alacrity to collect her wraps: bonnet anywhere but in its lawful bandbox, mantle from one quarter, gloves from another, if happily two of a pair were side by side. Mrs. Gillespie's rigid morality was tempered by a minor fault or two. Her bonnet slightly tilted to the right, her mantle serenely fastened wrong, and the left glove despaired of altogether, lent an air of mild rakishness to her comfortable person. Breathless with preparation, she panted, "If ever there was woman that needed a daughter! Do I look anyways right, Edward?"

Her big son smiled upon her. "Jump in, jump in!"

This euphemism was followed by long and patient boasting of the good lady to her place in the high sulky.

"Now talk to me while I get back my breath," said she. "Have you seen anybody I know to-day?"

"One or two you would be interested in," he answered, turning his horse towards the country that lay close about the small city.

Mrs. Gillespie divined that Anna Day would be one of these interesting people, and was disappointed when her son said, "One was a poor fellow whose life we are going to make a fight for. He had given himself up. But I think there is just a chance. If some money can be raised to send him away."

"Edward, I don't pretend to like your having so many poor people."

"I am sorry that the one rich fellow I know intimately is off in Europe this summer. You tell a story like that to Joe Ricker, and he'll hand you out a roll of bills and tell you to

hold your tongue about it. Won't have a check go through his office for fear his left hand may know."

"Were they poor people all day long?" Mrs. Gillespie inquired.

"Mother, don't pretend you are worldly. You can't keep it up."

"Well, I am thankful that you have a few rich folks,—Amorys and Glens and such."

"I have lost one of them to-day."

"Edward! Edward, I don't believe you manage them right. I've always heard that rich patients have to be humored. You aren't going to tell me it's Mrs. Glenn?"

"Mrs. Glenn herself."

"What ails her?" demanded Mrs. Gillespie fiercely.

"She has embraced the New Life." Dr. Gillespie threw back his head and laughed.

It was some time before Mrs. Gillespie could express herself, but "*What a fool!*" was audible at last. "That poor daughter!"

"If the daughter will take it philosophically,

it will be the best thing that could have happened to her."

"I wonder to hear you talk so, Edward. Is your brain affected, too?"

"That fretful, peevish woman was wearing out the life of her daughter. I'm not sure how this new thing may work, but I rather think it was the girl's only chance."

"For my part, I should think she'd rather have her mother sick than demented."

"You might have called her demented before this happened. She certainly had not a healthy mind."

"I hope I am not going to see you upset, too," said Mrs. Gillespie; "I'm sure I don't know who it will be next. Americans are a singular set of people: hard-headed, practical, yet terribly likely to fly off the handle. Do you suppose it's the climate?"

"Sentimental idealists, with all their materialism; with terrific nervous intensity, extravagance, excitableness. Fine stuff, though, mother, with spiritual yearnings that will not be denied."

“Don’t talk to me about Mrs. Glenn’s spiritual yearnings!”

“Well, if it does you any good, mother, I do feel rather sore about it, especially as this is the fifth case that has dropped off lately. I cannot afford it, that’s a fact. I was feeling blue, and that’s the reason I invited you to drive.”

“How are we to live, if all the world goes mad?” said Mrs. Gillespie.

“Don’t worry, mother. Truth is safe.”

“We know very well how to be poor,” said Mrs. Gillespie courageously. “I am not one to be afraid of poverty. But I want you to get on, my son, my son. I want you to marry. I promise to make myself small as a mother-in-law. I shall live with Sophia Greeley.”

“If anybody ever marries me, it will be to secure you for a mother.”

“Fiddlesticks!” Mrs. Gillespie straightened her bonnet to express her satisfaction, and succeeded in bringing it over the other ear.

“What does our friend Anna say to this business?”

“Nothing,—it is her mother.”

Mrs. Gillespie made a sound in her throat.

“Come now, mother. You know that squabbling family of Purdies: this new religion has transformed them.”

“So would the twenty-third psalm and the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians have transformed them. Poor Anna! She must find the smile wearing.”

“If you have to choose between a smile and a scowl, give me the smile every time.”

“I can’t put up with your tolerance, Ned. You do it to tease me. I should like to hear you when you get off with your doctors. I hope then you bray these fools in your mortars.”

“You ought to feel some sympathy with their religion, mother, if you don’t with their medicine. They have got hold of the idea. Mrs. Glenn appears to read and study, really to seek after spiritual knowledge—”

“Read! That order of mind can’t read a book, not a real book. Besides, I ’ve seen their books,—they read just as well back-

wards as forwards. I won't argue with you. You are only trying to see what I will say."

"Mother, you are the most sweetly feminine woman I know. You think a son's medical practice is threatened, and you set to work to demolish a sect."

Here was a word to fire Mrs. Gillespie. "It is the disorganization of Christianity, this cropping up of old heresies. Oh, I have read all about it. *I can* read. Shreds and patches of ancient philosophy."

"Have n't I heard you say, 'Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.' Religion and medicine are both doing that at this moment. Be patient, mother."

Mrs. Gillespie sighed. "I can see things in you that are so like your father," was all she said.

They rode for some time, speaking of objects by the wayside. "The asters begin to look like fall." "We need rain to lay this dust." "Let's stop and watch this harvesting machine."

"Do I understand that you are never to

go there again?" asked Mrs. Gillespie suddenly.

"It looks that way."

"So that's the end of it?"

Dr. Gillespie did not pretend to answer this ambiguous remark. It being a good bit of road, he let his horse out.

His mother was silent for an unusual length of time. Then she said in a subdued voice, "Edward, that was the girl I wanted you to marry."

"I noticed that you did. Do you see that squirrel run across the road?"

"I have observed her well on the committee for dependent children."

Her son made no reply. "Well," said Mrs. Gillespie, "if you don't care to hear my opinion of her, — Ned, you do remind me so of your father. There were times when you could n't get him to talk, and then you had to let him alone. I learned just when to look out for those times."

They rode for a while in silence along the prairie road, between the rich fields of the

Middle West. It was a hospitable country, ready to take to itself and nourish and comfort generous numbers of the human race.

"I am sorry for the folks on those New England farms," said Mrs. Gillespie cheerfully. "Our ancestors had 'hard scratchin'.' I am glad you had your start out here."

"You've stood by me, mother."

"When your father died, and left me with two little children, I said to my sister-in-law, Sophia Greeley, 'Those children shall be educated if I stand at the wash-tub. They were born to be educated.'"

"And when we went to the State University, it was n't any wonder that with such mothers we boys shook furnaces and the girls ironed their own shirt waists."

"And graduated at the top of your class, both of you! Poor Cicely! She had a happy life," her mother murmured; "and the husband and wife went together. And now we've little Cicely, you and I, to do for. But it is n't like a daughter," and the mother's voice broke. "*Nothing's like a daughter.*"

"Of course the country town was to my taste." Mrs. Gillespie continued her reminiscences. "When you left the medical school and settled in Clayton, that just suited me,—all their ways. But I wanted you to go to a city. Your coming to Waukego just a year ago, that suited me, too,—a large city, but not too large. And I mean you shall get on, if I can help you. I join everything I can."

"Pray don't go to sewing-societies to sound my trumpet, my dear mother."

"You leave that matter altogether to me. I am in the way of seeing people, and it is astonishing how many I know in a year's time. I've always been so. I used to wish your father was more my way."

"I suppose I do take after him. I can hardly remember my father," said her son sadly.

"You could n't follow in the steps of a better man, nor one more respected in the community in which he lived." Then slipping back into colloquial language, Mrs. Gillespie added cheerfully, "I hear a good deal of gos-

sip at one time and another. I hear a good deal about the Glenns and their past history. They have been a prominent family, *in* everything. It seems Miss Anna has spent a good deal of time with an aunt, sister of her father. A girl is a good deal what her aunts make her, especially if the mother is weak."

"Poor Anna!" Dr. Gillespie's mother looked at him in surprise, though she herself constantly made free with Christian names, as all good gossips do.

"Anna Day has had her trials," she continued. "They say her mother has been a nervous invalid for years, and we know what that means for the rest of the family. The other daughter has kept well out of the way. I don't have to express my opinion of her," and Mrs. Gillespie jerked her mantilla. "I hope your tolerance is n't going to extend to divorce. I can't abide the people who see good in everything. *Mush!*"

"Easy, easy, mother. Such a fine old bigot ought to have lived in the time of fagot and stake."

"I was never needed in the world so much as I am now!"

Dr. Gillespie was meditating. Like the genial bachelor Addison writing his essays for the *Spectator*, our friend, too, was "well versed in the theory of a husband or a father." As an intelligent spectator of matrimony, Dr. Gillespie gave his opinion. "The large proportion of divorces," he said, "are the result not of great sins but of little ones: disobligingness, heedlessness, impatience, crossness. People are careless of their health and get bad nerves. Then they get on each other's nerves till they can't stand it any longer."

"I call that entirely too charitable a view."

"There are exceptions, but the great mass of divorces are among persons who have few interests and resources, who have limited ideas of pleasure, not much education, not much religion, not much tradition of any sort. You see, mother, divorce is effect, not cause. You must get back to the cause: you must make better people, better boys and girls."

"I don't love to have you talk as if you defended it."

"There is justifiable separation, unquestionably, but most cases, by patience, forbearance, and tolerance, could be brought round. They lack manners, most of them, — manners and kindness."

"My darky washerwoman," said Mrs. Gillespie, "is going to get a divorce from her husband on the ground that he is so 'turrible triflin'. I believe that is a frequent cause," said the old lady with pride in her acumen.

"Yes, that sums it up for a good many cases."

"Susanna tells me that she is going to 'visit her father.' Pray, is that to be the language of the twentieth century? I have much to learn."

As Mrs. Gillespie got no reply, she continued, "I should n't mind much if they went their own way to destruction if they want to. They 'll be punished all in good time. It's their innocent children and their decent relations that I mind. It's the wreckage they strew the way with."

“Their relations are getting used to it in these days.”

“That’s no way to talk, Edward. I did n’t bring you up to talk that way.”

“Susanna’s a charmer, anyway.”

“Headstrong,—needs a firm hand already.”

“Has n’t her aunt a firm hand?” inquired Dr. Gillespie. “You ought to know better than I.”

“It stands to reason she can’t follow up Susanna every minute of the day. The child runs a good deal of the time. There’s nobody in particular to look after her. Miss Anna Day appears to be a very busy person. She has had time to do hardly anything on our committee since that child came here.”

“She has the dependent child under her own roof. I think she will find her mother far less care now that Mrs. Glenn has got religion.”

“If only she and her new-fangled sect did n’t think that they were the first ones to get it.”

“The rest of you have got to brace up and let your light shine.”

“Any religion that is good for anything gives the peace that passeth all understanding,” said Mrs. Gillespie softly. “That is what it is for. That is what I call practical religion.”

Her son did not answer. By and by he said, “Are you ready to turn round, mother? Do you say we must get home before dark?”

CHAPTER XII

A VISIT ACCORDING TO LAW

SUSANNA'S legalized visit to her father had been postponed from August to September and from September to October. There had been difficulties in negotiating the sojourn of a young daughter with a father in a bachelor apartment,—a grandmother on one side stipulating for the proprieties and a parent on the other wondering what on earth he could do with the child while he was down town. At last details were arranged, and Susanna was launched on her visit.

“Oh, goody, goodee, I am going to see my father,” she announced to Bessie Amory.

“I thought your father was dead,” said Bessie deliberately.

“Well, he is n’t,” answered Susanna indignantly. “He’s as much alive as yours is. He’s in Chicago, that’s all.”

Bessie Amory was a wise child and said no more. She went home and asked her mother questions.

“Heigho, old girl!” cried Warriner, as Susanna jumped into her father’s arms. He let her go a moment, that he might thank the Waukego lady who had brought her to the great city, and then turned down the long platform, Susanna dancing at his side.

“How are all the folks?”

“Oh, they are *very* well!” said Susanna joyfully, and followed it up with a laugh.

Her father held her off and looked at her. “Say, Sukey, you’re stunning. Where’d you get that hat?”

Susanna wheeled on her toes, to let herself be admired.

“You’ve grown about a foot!”

Susanna beamed at this sweetest of all compliments, and modestly suggested an inch and a half.

“You will know how to dress,” said her father approvingly, and Sue gave a wriggle of delight.

“What kind of a place are we going to?
Are we going to a house, or a hotel?”

“Just you wait. Which kind of a cab do
you like best?”

“Oh, a *hansom!*” said Sue fervently.

“You’re to have the say straight through
this visit. Hop in!”

“I wish Danny was here, don’t you?”

“Would you like to run up and see Dan at
his school?”

“Oh, *yes!*”

“So happy you can’t sit still, aren’t
you?”

“Oh, *yes!*”

“We’ll drop your traps at a friend’s house,
where you are to stay. I couldn’t put up a
little girl at my place; there’s nothing to eat.
It is n’t real living, you know.”

“We don’t any of us have a real home any
more, do we?” said Sue cheerfully, for she
had happiness to spare.

“There’s a lady that will take the best of
care of you. I’m having a day off, and we
will lunch, you and I, at a restaurant.”

All day long Susanna talked in italics, exclamation points, and laughter, till another ecstatic hansom cab carried her, after dinner, to the dwelling of her hostess.

Susanna admired the lady's dress, and thought her furniture beautiful, but she had never expected any but the most intimate friends to call her Sukey. She did not know what to make of the lady's familiarity with her, a stranger. Her father saw her shrink, and explained, "Mrs. Jewell has heard a great deal about you, girlie."

"I should say I had!" cried Mrs. Jewell loudly.

"Are you going away, papa?" Susanna was smitten with homesickness. "Oh, don't go away and leave me."

"Sue, be a lady, and we'll make another day of it to-morrow. Good-night."

Susanna clung to her father amid these strange surroundings, while Mrs. Jewell stood over them jocosely.

The little girl was somewhat reassured by the pretty bedroom she was led to, and by

the kindness of the tall lady, who somehow seemed much nicer in her manners as soon as Sue's father had gone away. The child was so tired that she could not long remember to be homesick, and before she knew what had happened to her, she had slipped away into a dream. Morning came and Susanna was a wide-awake little girl who wanted her breakfast. But there were no signs of breakfast or of hostess. Clocks struck nine and clocks struck ten, and at last Mrs. Jewell, in flowing negligée, came yawning to Sue's door.

"All dressed?" she cried.

"I've been dressed two hours," said Susanna as a matter of news. She was by this time as hungry and forlorn a child as you could find. "Is n't my father going to come and take me?" she inquired with some spirit.

"I'll ring for that lazy Bella to bring you some breakfast. Do you like your breakfast on a tray?"

Susanna had another swift revulsion of feeling, for the tray was so tempting and pretty, and the breakfast, what there was of

it, tasted so good. "I could eat about four breakfasts like that," she was confiding to herself as her hostess stood in the doorway saying, "I only take coffee myself. She brings it to me in bed. I suppose I 've lived so much in Europe."

Sue had had her first aversion to Europe when her mother had disappeared there. A second grudge against it was henceforth based on insufficient breakfasts.

"It 's eleven o'clock, and he has n't come," she remarked to Mrs. Jewell.

"I expect you had the time of your life yesterday," said that lady sociably.

"He 's very nice to go round with," said Susanna.

"So I 've found."

Again Sue did not like Mrs. Jewell, though she could not have told why. "He *said* he was coming early," she repeated.

"He may be working. I believe he does work occasionally — not to hurt."

"Yes," said Sue reasonably. "He is an architect."

"You 're right. He is n't a bad one, either, if he 'd stick to his job. You tell him that."

Susanna pondered how one could tell one's father such a thing as that. She liked Mrs. Jewell less and less.

"He 's had so much trouble, it 's sort of broken him up. There 's *some* excuse."

Susanna stared at the pretty lady.

"And while you are about it, you tell him not quite so much brandy and soda. That 's the way to make an impression on a man sometimes; a child can. They are always doing it in books."

Susanna's eyes widened in bewilderment.

"Don't you say anything about me," Mrs. Jewell continued. "He thinks a lot of you. He would rather have had you than the boy, but the judge would n't fix it that way."

Susanna moved away from Mrs. Jewell, but said only, "He has n't come."

"Oh, he 'll be along."

"I think I 'll go and find him. He put the card in my pocket so if I got lost." "Got lost," she surely had, the little Susanna !

"Gracious," said Mrs. Jewell amiably, "he don't want you there. Besides, he 's probably at his office. He 's forgotten all about you, most likely. You wait till I dress," she said good-naturedly, "and I 'll take you out shopping with me. Just you wait."

Susanna kept very still, and let Mrs. Jewell get safely away to the front of the house, around a turn in the hall, and well out of sight. Then she put on her hat and coat, grasped her father's card, and softly opened the door of the apartment. She avoided the elevator, and stole down two flights of stairs. "I don't like staying with ladies. I am going to stay with him," so Sue had made up her firm little mind. "He says there is nothing to eat, but there is nothing so nice as a restaurant. Ice cream always."

She encountered no great dangers in reaching her father's lodgings; for they were not far distant, and she was so intelligent a child as to ask questions of the right persons. Moreover, she was born a little Westerner, with courage and energy for her start in life.

She rang a doorbell with spirit, and bravely awaited the consequences. A Buttons of her own size appeared before her. "Does my father live here?" she naturally inquired.

"Tell me his name, and I'll tell *you*," said Buttons facetiously.

Susanna produced the card. "That's all right," said Buttons, who thought it not necessary to assume official elegance with a person of his own age. "He's out — that's where he is."

"Well, I'm coming in. If he isn't here, I'll just sit in a chair and wait. You please show me his rooms."

"Couldn't do that. I'd lose my job."

Susanna did not budge. "Then I'll sit on the door-steps."

"I'd lose my job if I let kids on the door-steps."

"You're a kid yourself," was on Susanna's lips, but she concluded politeness was her best policy.

"Couldn't I just see my father's rooms? He said he'd bring me some time."

"They're cleanin' up there. If you just pretend you're one of the scrub-woman's kids, come to bring a message, they might let you up. It's the fourth floor."

This appealed to Sue's dramatic sense, and "playing" she was a little Murphy, she flew past Buttons. His eyes followed her with the sad thought that she was too young to know she ought to have given him a quarter.

As it chanced, the scrubwomen had finished their work, and only a man remained, polishing a window from the outside. His occupation was so absorbing that he did not notice a child enter the room and shrink into a corner. Presently he went out and locked the door behind him.

It was two hours later when Susanna's father entered his rooms, and raised the window shades with a jerk to the top, leaving them cheerlessly askew for the rest of the day.

"What under the heavens?" — for there lay his little daughter fast asleep in a huge leather chair. Susanna awake was a person of resources, but Susanna asleep was the very

image of helpless, guileless childhood. Her father stood over her, and his heart swelled. He gave a great sigh, and stooped and kissed her little hand.

“Oh, o-oh!” Sue half awoke, and sleepily cuddled into her father’s arms.

“Why, girlie, what are you up to? How did you come here?”

Susanna yawned and stretched herself comfortably.

“Did you and the old lady have a quarrel?”

Susanna answered drowsily, “This is your old chair I *used* to go to sleep in.”

“Answer my question, Sukey, and let’s forget we have a past.”

But Susanna was all for reminiscence. “That’s the lib’ary sofa, and that’s the table with all the little drawers. You used to keep candy and peanuts in the bottom one. I’m going to look.”

“Take care; don’t you meddle!” said Warriner with a grim look. “Hands off!”

The child had the drawer open in a twink-

ling, and started back with a cry. "It's a pistol! I saw a pistol!"

"For Mr. Burglar. Keep away from that drawer; there are n't any more peanuts and candy. Come into the other room."

"Why, you've got my bedstead, my very own, and lots of things. Why, it's almost like — the way it used to be." *Home* was a word that this family with one accord never used if they could help it.

"I'm going to stay here," Susanna announced comfortably.

"But why did you leave Mrs. Jewell? I was just coming round after you; a man kept me. Who brought you here?"

"I came myself. I told her I was coming."

Her father looked puzzled. "Did n't you and she hit it off? Did n't you like her?"

"I see her picture," Susanna replied, eying a portrait on the writing-table.

"Don't you like her looks?"

She studied the photograph. "I'd like to stick a pin right straight through her," was her comment.

Warriner laughed loud. "I rather think you've done it, if you took to your heels in this fashion. Do you call that polite?"

"She was n't polite to me."

He laughed again. "I must get to the bottom of this. Tell me her language. She has language."

But Susanna held her tongue. She told her father she was hungry.

"Did n't feed you, was that it? Come on; you shall be fed."

Seated at a restaurant table, Susanna was radiant again. She looked across the little table gay with its shining damask and silver, and said, "O papa, sittin' over across from you is perfectly lovely. I know what, — I'm going to keep house for you some day. I could in your two rooms, with a little teeny gas stove, and we'd eat off the lib'ary table."

"You order, Sukey, — here's your pencil." Her father smiled forlornly as she chattered on. He was reflecting on the problem of shelter for his little waif. He solved it later by a conference with his janitress, and silent

apologies to his mother-in-law. A "shake-down" was provided for him on the library sofa, while little Sue returned to her own white bed in the next room. Her father lay awake long into the night, with sombre, tender thoughts.

Yet the next day was a happy one for both : a delighted "ride in the cars" to High Top, and a whole long Saturday with Danny. By this time, Dan was in full proprietorship of High Top, and swelled with pride as he showed it off to a younger sister. There followed noon-day dinner at the table of the House Mother, when Danny asked his friend Billy Holladay to eat with them. Billy was invited to go on the long drive in the afternoon, and hilarity lasted till nightfall. Dan was even permitted to see them off on the seven-ten train, and then there were tears and kisses unashamed.

"O dear, I don't know whether I'm happiest or mis'ablest," said Susanna.

"You and Dan are great chums, that's a fact!"

Such a look and such a smile !

Another day, and another day, and, truly enough, work suffered. Mrs. Jewell was aware of what was passing, and commented to herself, "He's glad of an excuse to go fooling about with that child. Don't I know him!"

There were also long talks at "home"; for so Susanna began to call Warriner's two rooms. "Tell us the news," he said. "What's your aunt Anna up to?"

"She's up to a great *many* things," Susanna replied; "me, for one. I take a good deal of time."

"Upon my word, you do."

"Because she teaches me two hours a day."

Warriner was thoughtful. He knew that Susanna was to have lived with her mother, and he suspected that his former wife was not doing the square thing by her own mother and sister. He would send a check to-morrow.

"Teaches you," he repeated, "and waits on my respected mother-in-law, and runs that big house, and what more? Aunt Anna can't afford time to get married, can she?"

"I wish she would ; and I know who," Sue added with great mystery.

"Who, for Heaven's sake?"

"*I'd* like to have her marry Dr. Gillespie; then he'd be my uncle."

"Describe him to me." Warriner listened with hilarity.

"Can't you bring them together?"

"He never comes any more. Grandma does n't have doctors. She 's all well."

"Good luck for Anna! What is the miracle?"

"It 's the New Life," said Susanna, in her most matter-of-fact tone.

"Oh, ho," her father laughed, and then was thoughtful.

"He never comes any more," Susanna repeated plaintively. "And I did n't have such a great many friends."

At the end of her visit, Sue reluctantly went home, maintaining to the last that she and her father were some day to keep house with the help of a small gas stove. The little girl had accomplished two considerable things by her visit. Gilbert Warriner did not at once

destroy the punctured portrait, and he did not immediately take the cartridges out of his pistol ; but the results were in the end the same as if he had had an instinct for melodrama.

CHAPTER XIII

CHRISTMAS

Daniel to his father

EAR FATHER,—Billy Holladay—
he spells his name wrong anyway—
that is n't a mistake—he wants me
to go home to Christmas with him. Can I ?
He told me to sound you and if you said
yes I could then he 'd get his mother to write
a regular invitation and I could send that to
you and you would write back and then I 'd
take both of them to the Head Master and
then he would say I could go. Billy says
that's Red Tape and you have to.

In haste, your affectionate son,

DANIEL B. WARRINER.

Early in the summer, when she was still
her former self, Mrs. Glenn had begun to put
to her daughter the anxious question, "What
are we to do about Thanksgiving? We've

always had them for Thanksgiving. I wish you would tell me *what* we are to do." It had been Mrs. Glenn's habit to take up her worries long in advance.

"I should drop Thanksgiving this year, mother," said Anna. "We will go into the country, or go to a matinée. That is what families always do that have gone to pieces in one way or another. It is n't everybody that can assemble their grandchildren. I don't propose to be sentimental about Thanksgiving when I am a lonely old woman."

"But we 've always had such pleasant occasions!" argued poor Mrs. Glenn.

"I should say pleasant occasions were over in this family for the present," said Anna.

Christmas raised still more difficult questions. There had been the agreement that the two children were to spend Christmas with their mother, for so the judge had deemed all children should. But with Jessie in the Riviera, other plans must be considered.

"Let us have both the children here, mother, and allow them to make all the noise they want

to. But don't let us try to make it like a home Christmas: skip stockings and tree. We will hide their packages all over the house, and let them romp after them."

With all her new composure, Mrs. Glenn still looked as if this were a dreadful prospect, and showed unmistakable relief when a letter announced Dan's visit to the Holladays. Susanna's disappointment was left to Anna to deal with.

"*I never* have Danny!" wailed his little sister. "Just one day at High Top. I think it's just as mean as it can be. I hate Christmas. I don't want any Christmas presents. I'll throw them out of the window." She sobbed in her aunt's arms, and would not be comforted. "I hate the Holladays. That Billy Holladay is the homeliest boy I ever saw, — *covered* with freckles! Danny likes him better 'n me! He'd rather spend Christmas with Bill — Billy!"

Mrs. Holladay welcomed her little guest with a kiss, and he did not resent it. Nobody had kissed Danny for three months. The whole large family took in the little boy with

pitying kindness, and at the first, everybody showed him considerably more attention than they bestowed on Billy. There was a tender watchfulness that Danny was quite unconscious of ; he only felt a congenial atmosphere in which he expanded and talked fast.

“ Poor little chap ! ” said Mrs. Holladay, after the children had gone to bed. “ How the little fellow talked ! It was you, Ben, that set him on. A child naturally pours out all his little experiences and opinions to his father, and if he is n’t there, the first fatherly person has to do. You were always that kind, Ben Holladay, always with boys at your heels.”

“ It was Jane here got him to talk. She took a shine to the boy on that train last spring.”

“ We must not make too much of him,” said the mother. “ We must help to keep him healthy, in his peculiar circumstances. He has a sensitive little face. I am afraid that child suffers.”

“ Don’t you worry,” said her husband. “ Don’t you coddle the boy. Nor you, Jane. I know you both.”

The day before Christmas! Day of closed doors, mysterious whisperings, smuggled packages, doorbells unexplained! Somehow, — nobody knew how, — a great tree was set up in the front parlor, and the doors straight-way locked. The two young lady sisters went in and out, squeezing themselves through the narrowest of openings, for little boys were hanging about and peering and pretending that they saw it all. Little Miss Polly, aged six, was the most troublesome. "You certainly will be stepped on, roly-poly, if you don't take yourself off. Go play with the boys. Shoo, all of you!"

Said Billy to Daniel in the low voice suited to the day, "Come on in here and shut the door. Don't let Poll in. She can't keep anything."

Billy opened the bottom drawer of a chiffonier. "Look! that's what I've got for papa and mamma. They hang up their stockings, and we get out o' bed in the dark and fill 'em," said Billy in a stage whisper. "I lend my father one of my long stockings, you see." Billy dis-

played a piece of carpentry that might have been any one of a number of things. "I made that with my saw, because mamma said that was what she wanted most of all. And I made that one for my father's office. They like made things a great deal better, my father and mother do. I have to buy things for my sisters, — three of 'em," said Billy magnificently. "You're going to get something on the tree — I know what!"

"So are you — from me!" said Danny, also swelling with a secret.

"You tell me, and I'll tell you. Swap."

"No," said Danny. Yet longing to tell something remarkable, he continued, "I had a letter from my aunt Anna, and she said my mother sent a whole box of presents to Sukey and me from over in Europe, and they were detailed — detained in the custom-house till somebody came and paid, and we could n't get 'em till after Christmas."

"They are n't Christmas presents after Christmas — how can they be?" argued Billy.

"They're just as good." But Danny was

cast down, and did not pursue the subject. "My father told me to make out a list and I did, and then he sent me a check, and told me I could come down and spend the end of the holidays with him, and he'd cash my check, and I could pick 'em out myself."

"That ain't any way," said Billy unfeelingly. "There ain't any Santa Claus about that."

"Oh, pooh, Santa Claus! You don't s'pose I believe in Santa Claus."

"Polly does," her brother chuckled. "When father dresses up, she's afraid of him, and she thinks he came down the chimney,—*father!*" and the naughty boy thrust out his little abdomen.

"My aunt Anna sent me a box of presents from grandma and Sukey and her, and I had to leave 'em at school 'cause the House Mother said I must come in a suit case."

"There was n't much Santa Claus about that, either," said Billy, who had a logical mind.

"I don't care. I don't have to have presents. I ain't a baby." Still Danny looked unhappy.

"Polly's the baby for presents. Pound

away, old girl! You won't git in! I'll show you Poll's."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Holladay was trying not to coddle Dan, though she could not keep herself from throwing him a bright smile whenever she passed him. "The child's not quite happy," she thought, as he and Billy came out of the chamber together. "Can't you get the sleds, Billy, and try the long hill with Danny?"

"I'd rather stay in the house," said her son, creeping towards the folding doors of the parlor.

"Be off with you!" cried the mother, guarding the door-knob.

When, after supper, these doors were opened, Billy and Daniel led the procession, with Polly prancing ahead. Mrs. Holladay laid her hand on our little lad's shoulder as the family stood about the tree. That he should have his share of everything, and should be at the centre of the family group, was her tender care. Yet Dan shrank back, and wished he could get behind her, as the family gifts came

down, and Santa Claus made his jokes that only the family could understand. He had his presents, too, but there were no jokes with them. Dan felt lonely because the rest knew each other so well, and were so merry together. They would suddenly grow polite when they spoke to him, and would look at him well, and follow him with their eyes. That he was not one of them pierced the heart of the little boy. Billy forgot all about him, and kind Mrs. Holladay was so hung about with nieces that she lost Danny in the crowd of laughing, talking Holladays. When at last they tore off the trappings of Santa Claus, and disclosed the perspiring father of the family in his shirt sleeves, then they all talked at once, and made an uproar that would ordinarily have delighted the soul of Danny. But now he felt utterly incapable of making a noise himself,—a sad state of mind for a boy of eleven. He busied himself in dismally examining his presents, which were scanty as compared with those of the uproarious Holladays. Presents shut up in a custom-

house or shut up in a bank check were somehow cold comfort. A gift in the hand is worth two in the bush, was Dan's distinct thought. He could not refrain from saying to a small Holladay cousin, "I've got lots of presents that I have n't got yet. I've got things in the custom-house." The little Holladay's eyes bulged, and she thought him a boy of importance.

It was Miss Jane who saw the child forlornly hugging his gifts, and she took it upon herself to cheer him. "And now we are going to dance!" she said gayly. But Miss Jane had mistaken her man. Dan hated dancing with a fierce hatred.

"I don't want to," he said miserably.

"Oh, come try," coaxed the lady.

Dan hung off. He made one attempt with round little Polly, and another with a tall cousin, but was embittered by both experiences. When the Virginia reel — to Dan a maddening entanglement — when this dance was announced, he slid out by the pantry door and up by the back stairs.

Now Dan had removed himself from the gay company, but such was the unreasonableness of young human nature, that he felt hard against the whole Holladay family, cousins included. He nursed his friendlessness, and knew he was doing a bitter thing when he sat down in his room in the dark and watched a chilly moonbeam that crossed the floor. That father and mother and brothers and sisters were having such a good time: that was his grievance as sounds of gayety came up the stairway. "They don't care anything about me. Nobody cares anything about me. And I won't care anything about anybody. I hate folks. They need n't give me presents just because they have to. I hate their old presents. They've forgot all about me. I hope they have. I hope they won't remember me all night. I wish they'd let me alone. I wish I had n't come. I hate to go visitin'. I'm glad I've got my ticket back. I never 'll go to dancin' school not never again if I live to be a hundred." These meditations ended of course in tears.

A voice called through the upper hall, "Danny! Danny Warriner!" He got away from the moonbeam, into the dark. But the door opened, and as Miss Jane understood it all at a glance, there were no explanations needed. She drew Danny up to her firmly and softly, and said, "The boys are all going out to sing carols, and they want you."

"We've been practicin' up carols at school," said Dan, with sudden animation. "I sing in the choir."

"Yes, I know you do. You must wrap up warm." And in the process of putting him into his coat and tippet, Miss Jane managed to give him a hug, which he took meekly and gratefully. "We think a great *deal* of Danny," she whispered sweet in his ear.

Miss Jane stood in the doorway with her friend, looking out upon the white road, and listening to the young voices, pure and clear as the snowy, moonlit night. "Those unearthly boy voices—how imagine they can whoop and yell like young savages! Listen—'angelic songs are swelling.'"

"Dan's voice is one of the sweetest of them," said Mrs. Holladay. "I hope he is happy with us. Little orphan!"

"Ah, the pity of it!" sighed Miss Jane.

"There you go again!" said Mr. Holladay.

The next morning, being Christmas Day itself, had its own observances. Mr. Holladay was a godly man, and on occasions would preach a plain little sermon to his family. On Christmas morning he read to them from the Scriptures, and then he said, looking to his children, who looked steadily at him, "We are thinking to-day of the beginning on earth of peace and love among men, which I believe will go on increasing till God's kingdom is come on earth as it is in heaven. Some day there will be no more war between nations, though we may not live to see that day. But the peace and love have got to start in the home, right here at this breakfast table, in order to make good men to vote, and to do the business of the country, and to make the laws, and to deal with other lands. So I say

Christmas Day ought to give you a fresh start every year in loving your neighbor as yourself, and your neighbor includes your family, don't forget that. Some people do. I say Christmas is a fresh consecration of the home, a festival of love and kindness as well as the celebration of the greatest birthday. And now let us say 'Our Father.' "

The young Holladays' faces looked sweet and solemn as their father said "Amen." It was only Mrs. Holladay who was troubled as she gave a quick glance at Danny. She whispered to Jane afterwards, "Men mean well; but how could he forget our little guest? I was listening for Danny."

"So was I. But I doubt if he took it to heart. Children are n't so deep, thank Heaven!"

"You never can tell."

CHAPTER XIV

THE POSTMAN'S BAG — 1903

Anna to Pauline

DEAREST PAULINE, — You ask always for the family news, and I take you at your word. You carry your friendship far, and include in it all I love. I am glad you care for what happens to them all, for we are indeed so bound together that their life is mine. Naturally, I have thought more lately of family life, having this shipwreck of Jessie's constantly in sight. If I am tolerant of my mother's new religion, it is because I think it has improved family life in far more cases than it has harmed it. I know you have some instances to the contrary. But we have to confess that it brings religion to bear: it is "not only with their lips but in their lives." No, no, I am not "going over." I confess their cheerfulness is rather wearing, for there is reason even in cheerfulness. I refuse

to abolish sympathy and tenderness and pity: Miranda's eternal-womanly "Oh, I have suffered with those that I saw suffer." Don't let us eliminate the loveliest thing in human nature.

Family news includes the children, of course. Dan went for Christmas to your friends the Holladays, and they made the child have a royal time. Yet I believe I am sensitive about people's being a little too kind to the children. I can feel the pity in the air, and it hurts my pride. It somehow seems unjust to the child, — a false position for him. He had a right to something else than compassion. He had a right to the nest, sheltered from strangers' pity. But I know the Holladays are the real sort, as they say in these parts. You never told me how you came to know them.

Dan spent a day or two with his father at the end of his vacation. We have been anxious about Bert's health: he has been looking badly. You know we were considerably stirred up last fall by a rumor, well authenticated, that he was to marry again. It has been denied lately. After Susanna came home, I could just

make out that she had seen this Mrs. Jewell. I wonder if Bert got Sue's opinion of the lady as a candidate for stepmother, and if he accepted it. Bert needed the children so, to keep up his tone.

Mrs. Charles Westlake, as he calls Jessie, is still abroad. Mother has letters pretty regularly. I will tell you, and nobody else, that the latest have had no mention whatever of her present husband. What does it mean? What next?

The rest of us seem to have recovered somewhat from the disasters of last spring, and have accepted the inevitable and readjusted ourselves. You have to, if you are going to live at all. We have sent out our usual cards for Wednesdays in January, which we thought we should never do again.

You inquire for the Gillespies. I see Mrs. Gillespie often, but not the doctor. You know my mother dismissed him some time ago. Our little "neglected and dependent" have kept our committee active lately, and that has brought Mrs. Gillespie and me together.

Why are you so pertinacious about Dr. Gillespie? You actually seem to blame me because I have barely seen him for the last six months. Give me Jane Austen's cap, donned soon after thirty, and signifying with dignity that she had done with thoughts of matrimony. Do be sensible, Pauline.

Even you appear to think that I do not make the most of myself in these days. I tell you, not one of you Ph.D.'s has had more good of her education than I have. It has saved my life for me; it has made me *have* a life, in spite of everything. I intend that Susanna and Dan shall have an education, if only to make up to them for their losses.

To return to your chiding letter,—I am used to take blame lightly. Half Waukego thinks me an idle society person; and the other half finds fault because I would rather read than play bridge. You tax me with “indifference”; mamma thought I “hindered” Dr. Gillespie. It takes some independence to keep steady on one's pivot.

Yet I understand. Your life has kept you

close to ideal things, filled with the high thoughts of great minds,—yes, dear, you have been a bit cloistered. You are rare, apart, not so much of the real world as I am. And that is why you refresh me.

Your loving

ANNA.

Pauline to Anna

DEAR ANNA,—Among the humbler uses of the imagination, count that of letter-reading. With a glance at your handwriting, to conjure up yourself, your own dear self! My impulse is to answer your letter instantly, which is proof of its vitality. I indulge myself now, with a heap of examination papers burying me under. You are delicious when you are dreaming of my cloistered ease, when you see me communing with mellow folios, and pacing grassy quadrangles.

Do you imagine that I do none of the rough work of the world? Alas for the bottle of red ink that stands without concealment on my desk, unworthy of any ink-stand dedicated to

beauty. Conceive me an ink-well symbolic of that sanguine fluid. Ah, don't imagine but I bear my part in the fray of education!

Infuriated with the last paper, I fling it on the floor, cork the red bottle, and turn back the silver lid of my true ink-stand, whence come—ah, if only they might come!—sweetness and light. There will be a tinge of red, I fear, in to-night's ink.

The "student habit" makes me study 'twixt the lines of your letter, dear Anna, and I read more than is writ down. I annotate; but not at present will I give you my marginalia. I hate brevity in letters: give me leisure and detail.

I am not so cloistered but I take keen interest in the affairs of the Warriners, not so enamored of the "still air of delightful studies" but I am touched by this bit of real life. It is your brother-in-law's case that moves me. He suffers from an intolerable piercing loneliness that we women have no conception of, with our innumerable small pursuits, our ability to "keep busy" under sorrow. Loneliness

accounts for Mrs. Jewell, but I am glad she is no more. It appears to me your mother is the one to help him, by keeping him as near to the children as she can. Does not her new kindness include him?

I do not find myself caring very much what becomes of Mrs. Charles Westlake. If you care, however, I will. My natural unregenerate feeling is, the less I know about her the better, and as for the new husband, I consign him to oblivion. But if she does also, will she come home to complicate all your affairs again?

Tell me always about Danny. I take much pleasure in that little urchin, and in that spirited little damsel, Susanna.

I am sending you "The Great Question," though I know you call his novels wearing. Yet you still read them, and after all, to get one's self read by such as you is the thing. I grant you, such a style tries the virtues of a reader. He who runs may not read, and most people do run in these days. Those who read fiction canter. Nevertheless, I love his

phrases: I want to thank him on the spot. And as for matter, it is invaluable to me in my cell, for I live generously upon vicarious experience. After all, most of us know the world about equally through print, and through observation. Read "The Great Question" patiently, and you shall have your reward. "Why write at all, if not clearly?" you say in one of your last letters: "I love a clear mind as I love clear air or clear water." I slipped that into my note-book, for the benefit of my girls who write. All your character is in it. You are "clear" yourself, dear Anna. But still I am prepared to defend obscurity in my favorite author. Not everything about human nature can be told in your simple, direct fashion. I know you say he lacks moral clearness as well. That is a more serious matter, and too large a subject to enter upon as I turn my last page.

So you like my Holladays! Do not take their kindness too much to heart. They are just as good to me. Their home radiates kindness. It is a blessing to many other people besides

the Holladays themselves, — to me, for example, since I have had no home but college.

Write soon, but let me hear no more of Jane Austen's cap. Would it be treachery if you were to inclose some of the children's letters?

Your devoted

PAULINE.

Daniel to his father

DEAR FATHER, I got back all right last night and the House Mother said it was the worst noise *she* ever heard and that was saying a good deal. But she gave us a hot supper — *she*'s a fine old girl. I hope your cold is better. You ought to have a House Mother. *She*'s always after colds. Says *she* owes it to our mothers. Funny they don't think fathers care. Billy calls her the Old Coddler, but his mother's just as bad, and his godmother's worse. That Miss Jane is jolly, though. *She* seemed to think most everything a boy did was funny ; and everything naughty, *she* said was Shyness.

I have n't written a letter to Mrs. Holladay

yet, but I'm going to. That's the worst part of visiting. My room is so little, most of my presents are under the bed. I haul 'em out to show the boys. You need a house to spread 'em round. Those presents out of the custom-house were dandy. Aunt Anna had to pay more than half the price all over again to get 'em. You told me to do the square thing. Sukey is too little. Either you or I'll have to pay for her. I had a letter from Suke, blaming me because I did n't come Christmas. I can't till Easter, I've got too much to do. I wrote her a letter and told her she'd have to get along without her family till then. She makes an awful fuss,—hugs you so, and cries when you go. I'm going to be on the junior team, though not this term.

Your aff. son,

DANIEL B. WARRINER.

CHAPTER XV

WEDNESDAYS IN JANUARY

IN her drawing-room, on the first Wednesday, Mrs. Glenn wandered idly, touching the flowers, setting a chair, straightening a picture,—standing off, and measuring effects. At the sound of the doorbell, she smiled, glanced at a mirror, and smiled again. And well she might, for, as Anna had written to her friend, “Since my pretty, youngish mother has taken to pink, she is irresistible. ‘Pink is woman’s best friend,’ said poor faded Mlle. Vinet.”

Mrs. Glenn welcomed her first guest with all sweetness and grace, but with considerable vagueness. “I am Mrs. Gillespie,” said the lady cordially. “I always come early, on the first day. It’s my way.”

Mrs. Glenn murmured sweetly again, though distracted by her visitor’s toilette. “I wanted to have a good visit before the rest

came. That's the way to manage these teas, I find. I am from the country," said Mrs. Gillespie, with a jolly wag of her head, "where we take our knitting and spend the afternoon."

"Oh, I hope you will spend the afternoon with us," said the society woman quickly and cordially.

"It depends. I may," said Mrs. Gillespie. "My son does n't go to teas. In fact, I think he never went to one. But I got him to say he would come here to-day. I told him I should wait till he came," she added firmly.

"I am much flattered, — such a busy man," Mrs. Glenn murmured. "But why should n't we sit down and chat comfortably?"

"That was what I calculated on, before the rest came. I like to get acquainted," said Mrs. Gillespie with all her geniality.

Anna, from her position in the dining-room, could see the two ladies seating themselves upon a distant sofa.

"Who is it?" asked her vis-à-vis, who presided over the chocolate, while Anna sat high behind an hereditary tea-urn. She wore

a gown of deep rose color. The young girl in paler rose smiled across the table. "It is Somebody: I can see by your eyes."

"I was wishing I could hear that conversation," said Anna. "Mrs. Gillespie," she added.

"That funny old party?" said pert Miss Daisy Parker. "I hope she's coming our way. She owns a son," said Miss Daisy with mock awe.

Anna moved the tea-cups about.

"He's rather the coming man among the doctors, so they say."

"I hadn't heard that."

"Why, now I think of it, didn't your mother have him before she—" Miss Daisy clapped her hand over her mouth. "Rather rough on the doctors, all that new business. Hush,—I'll change the subject! How many men do you think will turn up, Anna? Three promised me solemnly."

When Mrs. Glenn was obliged to rise and greet other friends, she said sweetly, "Mrs. Gillespie, I know Anna wants to give you a cup of tea."

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“I’ve had my eye on her for some time,” answered Mrs. Gillespie, easily got rid of. She had been waiting for an arrival to release her.

“Pretty, all very pretty,” she murmured to herself, as she walked to the dining-room. “The pretty side of life. A little of it does very well.” She felt pleased with her tolerance of “society ways,” as she surveyed Anna and her tea-table, with its roses and silver and Dresden tea-cups.

“Well, now, this is very pretty to look at.” Mrs. Gillespie had never acquired “charming” or “delightful.” “I was always fond of sprigged dishes.”

“Mrs. Gillespie, this is Miss Parker. Will you have some of her chocolate or my tea?”

“I never was much for eating between meals, but you do have things so pretty, I shall have to spoil my supper just to see if they are as good as they are pretty. No, nothing so solid as a sandwich. I shouldn’t mind one of those pink sugar-plums.”

“Do sit here, Mrs. Gillespie.”

"I am going to sit right down beside you, and I hope nobody else will come for some time. I expect my son."

"That makes four," said Miss Daisy Parker.

"He was pleased to be invited," said Mrs. Gillespie formally. "He did n't say a word against coming. When there is an invitation, he generally has the best of reasons why I should go, and why he should n't. But not this time."

"That's nice for us," said Miss Daisy. "We don't like to have a man dragged, do we, Anna?" Daisy particularly liked to hear old ladies babble about their sons, and she drew Mrs. Gillespie out. Arrivals were few on this first Wednesday, and for a quarter hour Daisy and Anna had Mrs. Gillespie to themselves.

"We might do a little committeeing now we are here so convenient," said she, turning to Anna. She had been taking the measure of Miss Daisy, and had concluded that she would not "do," for the strongest instinct of Mrs. Gillespie in society was that of mother-

in-law. She turned squarely to Anna, leaving Daisy to pilfer bonbons from a silver dish.

“Now I am chairman, I feel the responsibility day and night,” said Mrs. Gillespie. “And yet I can’t turn our house into an orphan asylum. I carried two of my neglected and dependent home the other day and put them to bed. It seemed the easiest way to dispose of them, a little brother and sister. The father had taken himself off, sick of his job, as my son says.”

The smile on Anna’s face vanished like a light gone out. Seeing this, Mrs. Gillespie continued in a cheerful tone, “The poor are so good to each other ; the mother of one brood so willing to take one or two more under her wing. They’re not squeamish as we are about giving and receiving.”

“Must the children be sent to the Home ?” Anna inquired.

“The neighbor thinks not. She is sure the mother will come round, and be able to work : says the thing that will make her come round is the children. The neighbor says she’ll

see they don't starve right off. That woman will wear a crown," Mrs. Gillespie concluded impressively.

Anna's face was sorrowful. The broken home looked at her from every novel and newspaper, from society gossip, and from philanthropic work. Once made sensitive on a subject, she reflected, and it fills the world.

"Really I don't suppose I ought to get to talking about such a subject on such an occasion as this—it does n't seem to fit in," Mrs. Gillespie apologized, glancing at the gayly-dressed people gathering about the tea-table.

"Why not? It is all true—it is all there—we can't forget it."

"Am I to see my little friend Susanna?" inquired Mrs. Gillespie.

"I hardly know where Susanna is," said Anna, suddenly reproaching herself. A child's mother would have supplied her with some little part to play, if it were only behind the scenes. Susanna, indeed, was hanging about upstairs, wondering when the company would go, and she could have some macaroons.

Anna presently achieved the pouring of a cup of tea, while she lost not a gesture in the tableau of her mother receiving Dr. Gillespie for the first time since his dismissal. Anna had dreaded this interview for both, imputing to Dr. Gillespie her own feminine sensitiveness. But it had not occurred to him that he should have any "feelings" whatever; he was quietly amused and interested to meet his former patient, and congratulated her on her improved health.

Anna had also imagined that a man who never went to teas would be difficult to manage when actually arrived at one. She had meant to let Miss Daisy try her skill. Dr. Gillespie made, however, straight for Anna's tea-urn; and in the presence of a number of observing women, seemed extraordinarily glad to see Miss Day. "Well, I declare!" said Miss Daisy Parker to herself.

"May I give you a cup of tea, and will you have a 'friendship wafer'?" asked Anna. Again Miss Daisy Parker said something to herself.

By seven o'clock Anna and her mother sat down to talk it over. "Well, *one* is got through with," said Mrs. Glenn.

"We had a number of your new friends, mamma, did n't we? Tell me about those last two ladies in the charming gowns." Mrs. Glenn, after several years of invalid seclusion, had become rather a social leader in her new religious circle.

"There is no need of wearing depressing clothes," said Mrs. Glenn, repeating what she had heard often. "Why does Mrs. Gillespie dress as she does? Why does n't her son persuade her?"

"What does he know about it?" laughed Anna happily.

"Did you see him come in with his great coat on, that he had been driving in? I wonder how you managed him in the dining-room."

"I told him to take it off."

"I miss Jessie at such times," said Mrs. Glenn.

"So do I, mother. I always think of her when we have people here."

"I wish she could know the friends I have now. It would be the *thing* for Jessie."

"How do you think the house looked?"
Mrs. Glenn continued. Mother and daughter congratulated each other on the "prettiness" of their first Wednesday.

On the third Wednesday Anna remarked that it was largely "the old guard," friends of society days when Anna and Jessie had come out, friends whose family histories they knew for generations, and who knew the Glenns root and branch. These people talked incessantly about the affairs of all the rest, and it was ill-natured gossip or sympathetic interest according to the native disposition of the speaker. There was much kindly curiosity about the affairs of the Warriners, mingled with vulgar satisfaction in the sensations they afforded.

The rooms of the Glenn house abounded in windows and recesses that lent themselves to conversation. The old friends lingered, in the pleasant fashion of the provincial city, where people sit down, said one visitor, more than

they do in New York and Chicago. "In New York they *never* sit down!"

Three ladies occupied a bay window at a distance from their hostess, and bent their plumed heads to listen closely.

"You know I am different from the rest of you: I am a comparative new-comer," one lady was saying. "I had never seen Mrs. — I don't know her latest name. She went to Chicago on her first venture just before I came here. Well, this was at Chamouni. We started out all three to walk up to the Mer de Glace, — a good day's walk there and back, — my sister and my brother-in-law and I. It's a wonder more people don't do it, but we met very few. Glorious! — but I won't stop to describe scenery, — that is n't what I am about. Halfway up we met a woman entirely alone — a beautiful woman, dragging her soft black gown after her, and trailing a closed parasol in her hand. Her hair was loosened in the wind, and her big hat tilted, as if she had n't cared. She hardly moved forward at all, just stood, and looked and looked, then she would

turn and walk back a bit. We kept her in sight for a long time. But it was her face I can never forget. I said to my sister, 'There's some story. I'm perfectly sure of it.' She looked dazed, distraught. 'Do you think we ought to leave her?' we women said, but my brother-in-law laughed at us. We went on up and had our luncheon, and came back in the late afternoon. You know that late afternoon light in Switzerland. Well, I won't undertake to describe the Vale of Chamouni. If you will believe me, there was that woman again, still dragging her parasol, a little higher up than when we had seen her in the morning. She had been wandering all day on that mountain, without a thing to eat, and never holding up her dress or putting up her parasol, I'm certain. We passed her, and soon saw that she began to go down the mountain slowly. 'We must keep her in sight,' we said, — 'the night is coming on.' When we reached the village we lost her. Well, let me tell you, we were sitting at supper in our hotel, when who should walk into the *salle-à-*

manger, trailing her dusty gown after her, but our lady of the mountain. My husband took one look at her, 'By George, that's Jessie Glenn!' She turned her back towards us, and after that night we never saw her again. That's all my story. We never heard of her after that. I would n't have her mother know for the world."

"Or her sister?"

"What good would it do? But what do you suppose it all meant?"

They shook their heads, but each knew what she should tell her husband.

"I wish I could forget her face. I wonder if she will ever come home."

"The little girl is here with the grandmother. I saw her looking out of an upstairs window as I came in, — standing alone, looking out."

"Poor little soul!"

"Anna won't let her suffer."

"Not Anna, or anybody else can help her suffering. Well, I might moralize, but I won't. It's all too self-evident. How do they dispose of the boy?"

“He is at High Top. I suppose that was the best way they could get rid of him.”

There was a sigh from the mother of three boys.

“What is this country coming to?” inquired the eldest of the ladies. “Now this week it is the Lyndes breaking up, next door to us. We shan’t deserve much longer to be called the City of Homes. We dare not take it up for discussion in our club. They say there are two subjects nowadays we can’t touch in the club, — Divorce and the New Life. We’ve got them both among our members.”

The ladies quickly and guiltily changed the subject as their hostess approached them.

As two friends went down the steps together and walked away in the winter twilight, they talked of their college acquaintance, Anna Day. The first lady remarked, “I remember her perfectly at twenty. She had what people call the ‘manner’ of our college. She was making the superhuman effort to speak English English, for one thing. But all that has worn off; she has improved immensely. She

never had her turn of being pretty when she was young ; she is having it now. She looked handsome to-day."

"I have always felt sorry for Anna Day, spite of her worldly advantages."

"I am surprised that she has n't amounted to more," said the critical acquaintance. "She had a good mind ; she ought to have taken a second degree. She has just stayed on at home all these years. They tried to get her to be secretary of the club the other day. She said flatly she had too much to do at home. How essentially feminine ! That secretaryship is one of the greatest *opportunities* a woman can have in this city. She can be a *power*!"

"It is my opinion," said the other lady, "that Anna Day does her duty 'in that state of life unto which it doth please God to call her.'"

The friend looked at her as at a hopeless reactionary. "I suppose you mean sitting behind a silver tea urn, pouring tea."

CHAPTER XVI

THE CHINA CLOSET

BEFORE Lizzie Meserole makes her visit, we must have the china closet cleaned. Dear Lizzie is such a house-keeper!"

"Let me help! Let me help!" cried Susanna, who loved commotion, if it were no more than the upheaval of a china closet. "I'll put on my Science apron,"—a name that glorified checked gingham in Sue's eyes. She wore her apron in lesson time, and fancied herself the equal of college girls in laboratories.

"Oh, let me go up the step-ladder. I can reach the top shelf. *I have!* You can climb up by the shelves and the drawers, grandma! You can! Danny said you could, and we did!"

"Susanna!" said her aunt gravely. "What were you after?"

"Ginger, but there wasn't any."

"Do you think that was just the thing for a little girl?" said her grandmother.

Susanna had not much to say for herself, and became busy with her apron-strings.

"I know you are unwilling to talk about it, Anna, but you must see for yourself what Lizzie Meserole has done for me."

"I am so thankful you are better, mother!"

"I am entirely well," Mrs. Glenn corrected her. "Even Dr. Gillespie congratulated me on my looks."

"Magnanimous, since he lost a good patient."

"He has lost a number," said Mrs. Glenn sweetly but triumphantly. "So has Dr. Robinson from his parish."

"I am sorry for the regular practitioners of religion as well as of medicine in these days," said Anna. "Shall we begin to take down the dishes?"

"I shall take them down with my own hands, and, Anna, I shall trust you to wash them," said her mother with gentle patience.

"Oh, I'll be so careful!" pleaded Susanna.

But Mrs. Glenn's anxiety for her best china was quite free from metaphysics, and she insisted like any housekeeper upon doing most of the work herself. Susanna in her Science apron, stood looking on disconsolate.

“You 'll fall, grandma, you will !”

Her grandmother stopped on the third step to give her a little lecture on false fears.

Susanna was ignored in the work and in the conversation. She listened bewildered to such talk as this: “How that pitcher makes me think of dear aunt Lucy ! She had such a fondness for pitchers ! She made it a point always to buy one when she saw it — buy it on the spot, — for there is never any end to broken noses. You can't have too many.”

Susanna, though called a bright child, followed with difficulty. “How this dinner set carries me back ! They were always our company dishes, with the flowers and gold. I never shall forget how that soup tureen used to stand up so grand before mother. Take care — have you got it safe ? I remember it the first time your father ever dined at our

house, Anna. He was Judge Day, and we had out the best dishes. I was a girl in white, with a rose in my hair. This tureen always calls up your father, Anna."

Susanna was mystified, as if she were seeing ghosts.

"That fruit-dish was your great-great-grandmother's, dear." Susanna winked. "See the blue castle in the bottom. No, I'd rather your aunt Anna should take it."

Susanna felt snubbed and, what was worse, useless. It is their mothers who best understand how to make children feel useful.

Anna continued her remonstrances. "Mother, please don't take that next step on the ladder. You are wonderfully agile, but think what it would be for you to fall."

"Don't think," said Mrs. Glenn good-naturedly. "I can easily reach the top shelf."

"Won't you please hold on with one hand? Don't let us talk until you are down."

An unhappy thought struck Anna, as she handled the old china. The good old family history had been interrupted, and Susanna

and Dan could not look back with the former pride of unbroken tradition.

“ Will you set these on the mantel, mother’s aunt Tidd’s vases ? ”

Anna bore them across the room as if they were sacred vessels, and was placing them reverently on the mantel, when a crash and a cry brought her back to her mother’s side. Mrs. Glenn lay white and moaning, trying to say, “ It’s nothing. It’s nothing.” Her smile was twisted with pain. Anna did not stop to argue with her mother that she was suffering. Mrs. Glenn closed her eyes and made no resistance as Gretchen and Anna helped her to her bed. “ Mother, I have telephoned for Dr. Gillespie.”

“ *I telephoned !* ” cried Susanna.

Mrs. Glenn said, “ No, no, no ! ” unable to frame a sentence.

“ I am only afraid he may be out at this hour. We may have to wait.”

“ He must not come,” Mrs. Glenn faltered. “ I am doing nicely.”

“ I don’t know what the matter is, dear

mamma, but I know we are not going to have you suffer any more than we can help. I believe it is your poor shoulder."

Mrs. Glenn frowned with pain, but made no answer.

"I know several places where we might catch Dr. Gillespie," said Anna.

"I'll go and catch him," Susanna volunteered.

"I mean on the telephone. Please bring me the book and a pencil and paper, that's a good child."

When Anna returned from the telephone, Mrs. Glenn opened her eyes, and said faintly, "Did I break the dish?"

"No, you didn't, dear; but I am afraid that saving it cost you a bad shoulder."

"Ah," said Mrs. Glenn patiently, "you and Susanna, with your fears that I should fall —"

Anna stared.

"He's come! He's come!" shouted Susanna, after a long ten minutes had passed in silence.

Anna met the doctor with "What can I

do? My mother refuses to see you. I think there is some trouble with her shoulder."

"Then there ought to be no delay, poor lady."

"She has sent for a friend of her new way of thinking. She is in great pain, but she shows wonderful self-control. Oh, I can't see her suffer so, I can't!" Anna's voice broke. "When it was just a matter of soothing her poor nerves and stopping her headaches, I was glad of this new healing, but now, *I* can't bear it if she can!"

"I can't set her shoulder by force."

"If you would stay below a little while,— it is too much to ask, with your time so valuable — I think I may persuade her, — or the pain may." Anna shivered.

"Yes, if it is dislocated, the pain may."

"Oh, my poor mother!"

"Better let me see the New Lifer that is expected," said the doctor. "I am prepared to take the bull by the horns. We'll hold a consultation. It is just possible that she may be a person with a grain of sense."

Anna did not commit herself so far as that.

"At all events, Susanna will entertain you. She is somewhere downstairs."

"Has Harriet come?" asked Mrs. Glenn faintly, as Anna returned to her side.

"No; Dr. Gillespie."

"I am doing nicely. I do not need him. I want Harriet."

Again the doorbell rang. "Don't leave me, *don't* leave me," her mother pleaded, as Anna started to meet "Harriet." She also had intended to take the bull by the horns and to introduce the two practitioners. But before she could reach them, she heard their cheerful voices, apparently in friendliest discussion. Harriet was indeed a very pleasant and chatty person, good to have about, and an undoubted "help" to Mrs. Glenn. She appeared in no haste to terminate the interview with the good-humored doctor.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Glenn was half sobbing, "Oh, I don't know—what I shall do—I don't know what I shall do—My shoulder

— I thought I could — oh, I can't wait for Harriet. Dr. Gillespie, — oh, Dr. Gillespie!"

Anna flew to the stairs. "Dr. Gillespie, come!" He came two steps at a time, with Harriet following in gentler haste.

Anna shrank into one corner of the room at that moment when the shoulder was set, and she followed the doctor out with tear-stained face and voice.

"Harriet is a brick. Better let her help you nurse your mother, though understand that I am in charge of the case. Your mother will rest now."

"You will come to-morrow?"

"Yes; for a few days I will look in upon you."

Anna clutched the baluster. "I don't often feel faint."

"You have had a pretty rough experience."

"Have you seen Susanna?" asked Anna weakly, desiring him to go.

"She seemed to be busy down below," answered Dr. Gillespie. "I'll pay her a visit on my way out."

By this time Mrs. Glenn was resting easily, and her friend Harriet was by her bedside, talking about the fashions. Anna went to her room in sheer exhaustion, and closed the door upon the household.

An hour later, she went calling through the house, "Susanna! Where is Susanna all this time? Susanna!"

The little niece came rushing, bright and breathless, and fairly shouting, "I finished the china closet: I've got it all done, and I never broke a dish. I went up and down the step ladder and so did Dr. Gillespie. Oh, we had such a good time! He sang and he whistled. I'm glad I had this Science apron to clean the china closet in, are n't you?"

"Oh, Susanna!" was all her aunt could say.

CHAPTER XVII

SUSANNA GOES CALLING

ANNA wished that her niece had not that lonely little trick of standing by the half hour looking out of the window. She seemed to have her thoughts: what were they? Her aunt came up behind Susanna and laid her hand upon her shoulder. "What would you like to do this afternoon, Sukey?"

Bessie Amory's mother had always things for Bessie to do, but kind Aunt Anna would ask politely what Sue would prefer herself. The living with a grandmother and an aunt was, in truth, a curbing of her activities. Such a life had not the natural expansion and suggestiveness of a child's own home. It savored always of visiting, which is a limited mode of existence.

"Can't you think of something you would like to do?" Aunt Anna repeated.

"I don't know," Sue answered, shifting to

the other foot. After consideration, she said, "I guess I'd rather go and see Mrs. Gillespie than anything else I can think of."

"I would go," said Aunt Anna cordially, relieved of care, and glad of this innocent communication with the Gillespies. Ah, Anna! Feeling herself an unworthy aunt, she helped Sue to make ready. "I am glad this is a nice country city, where little girls can go and make calls alone. Only three blocks."

"As if I was afraid!"

"Walk straight there, and come straight back, sweetheart," said Anna, perceiving how much she loved her little niece. "I shall watch you down Elm Street."

When one is ardent for a visit, nothing is more dampening than to encounter one's friend unconcernedly leaving his house. If one can experience this chill at fifty, then far more keenly at ten, when the suspicion that you are not wanted is frequent and bitter. There was, for example, Dr. Gillespie, just driving out of the side yard in his sulky, with his head turned towards Oak not Elm Street.

And there was Mrs. Gillespie, coming down her front door-steps, trying to fasten her glove with the hand that held her bag. This absorbing occupation of her friend left Susanna standing on the pavement for some time unnoticed. Feeling smaller every moment, she had about made up her mind to turn and depart, when Mrs. Gillespie wrathfully abandoned her glove button. "Well, if it wants to stay so, let it!"—her attitude towards dress on most occasions. Susanna's aspect was so attractive after that of the refractory button, that Mrs. Gillespie's perturbed face broke into a beaming smile.

"I believe you could bring it together," said Mrs. Gillespie, offering her fat wrist to Susanna.

"I 'll try," said the little girl, recovering her lost importance. "There, I did!"

"You are a capable child. Where are you going, pray, this fine day?"

Little Susanna, not yet instructed in "tact," answered truthfully but sadly, "I *was* coming to call on you."

"Bless your little soul. And I having to hurry off West on business. Now, supposing you should just come along too. How would that suit?"

"It would suit very well indeed," said Susanna politely.

"You see this street, that begins so pretty and genteel here by the Lake, runs a long way straight west, and ends among the poorest people in the city. That's why people are so particular to have East on their visiting cards."

"Because they want people to know they are the nice ones?" said Susanna intelligently.

"I should n't talk so to a child," said Mrs. Gillespie. "That button spoiled my temper. They want their friends to find their houses easily, and the store wagons, too. Well, however that may be, it's the West folks that we are going to call on, you and I."

"It gets worse and worse," Susanna remarked with interest, as the street grew dirtier and the houses sank in gentility.

“What have you been about lately?” inquired Mrs. Gillespie sociably.

“I have been taking care of grandma. I’ve been the trained nurse. I’ll show you my chart.”

“You don’t say so!”

“Grandma was hurt all over. She felt all twisted.”

Mrs. Gillespie reflected that it was not decent to show too much satisfaction. She said in as sad a voice as she could muster, “I hope your grandmother is improving.”

“Oh, *yes!* It’s so nice to have Dr. Gillespie coming every day!”

“Ah!” said his mother.

“Mrs. Meserole is going to make her a visit very soon, and grandma says he mustn’t come after she is there.”

“Hm-m-m! Is there any more news?”

“Oh, yes, there’s a *lot* more. Pretty soon it is Easter vacation at High Top, and then Danny’s coming. In two weeks.”

“How is your grandmother going to stand that?”

“Grandma does n’t mind boys the way she used to, Aunt Anna says.”

“Still, a boy is a boy. I remember some remarks of Plato. My son called my attention to them. We most of us know what a boy is; we don’t have to go to Plato.”

Susanna was not prepared to deny that her beloved Danny was a boy; but it was no new thing to be bewildered by grown people’s forms of speech. She gave a little hop and skip to signify her own pleasure in Dan’s visit, whatever might be the prospect for her grandmother.

Nevertheless, the watchword, “Don’t disturb grandma,” had been for these two children a wholesome discipline in consideration for other people. “Think of the other person, is the beginning of civilization,” said the Head Master of High Top to his young barbarians.

The tenement district to which Mrs. Gillespie was traveling was that of the small city. There were not the high, congested buildings of the great cities, but small, two-story wooden

houses, with three or four rooms to the floor, and each with its back porch and tiny yard. Life might be in such a place squalid or self-respecting, according as education in living had advanced. Mrs. Gillespie, always ready to see the superiority of the West to the East, pointed out to Susanna how homelike was the housing of the poor in their cheerful little city.

“I am Mrs. Gillespie,” said that lady with much dignity, to the woman who answered her knock. “My son is Dr. Gillespie,” she said, with pride added to dignity. “I came to see you about those children of your neighbor’s.”

“She commt out of hospital to-day or to-morrow.”

“We have found two families that will take them,” [Mrs. Gillespie continued. Miss Day has at last found some people who are willing to take the girl, and I have found a person who will take the boy if our society will pay a small board. You have been very kind to them, Mrs. Klotz.”

"Childer oughter have peoples kind," said the woman grimly.

"Where are they now?" inquired Mrs. Gillespie.

"Gone to playgroun'—mine and dem."

Mrs. Gillespie was full of benevolent satisfaction, for she was also a leader in the Play-ground Association. "That's right. That's right. Now, if we should take them away tomorrow, would that suit all round?"

The woman with the hard hands shook her head. "No, no, nein, nein!" she repeated, getting excited. She pointed upstairs. "Dis, home."

Susanna stood at the top of the steps, listening intently.

"But their father is gone, and their mother is sick."

"Better; she commt home. No childer, no home. You unnerstan'? I cannot in English."

"But how are they to live?"

"You unnerstan'?" cried the neighbor, frantically bursting into German. She pointed to a soup-pot on her stove.

Mrs. Gillespie looked reverently at the soup-kettle, and repeated, “‘When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.’” She turned and saw Susanna listening. “But, Mrs. Klotz, you can’t go on giving them food. And how is their rent to be paid?”

“She better,—all well. She earn wan-seven-tee-fife. Her man no good.”

“You are sure she can keep up her home?”

“If she haf childer—No childer, den she drink—sure! Her man no good. He say, ‘You marry anoder man—I gone.’”

“Then she loves her children?” asked Mrs. Gillespie in a businesslike voice.

The woman had no English to answer such a question, and Mrs. Gillespie made haste to say, “Yes, of course she does,” for the German neighbor was a person of force.

“Are Hansie and Emil good children?”

Their friend laughed and shrugged one shoulder.

“Well, we can’t expect too much,” said the visitor.

"Der mudder not let dem go 'way," said Mrs. Klotz slowly and emphatically, disposing of the subject.

"Then we must help her."

The woman nodded assent.

"I suppose she can get a divorce for desertion."

"She don' nefer want anoder man — she say dat."

"They often come back after they have taken a vacation," suggested Mrs. Gillespie cheerfully. "Vacations for married people are rather a good idea, I think myself."

"Peoples what nefer got marrit don' know de trouble what comes." Mrs. Klotz pronounced *trouble* with a fine roll of the r. It was the first word of two syllables that she had mastered on coming to America. "You got marrit," she nodded conclusively to Mrs. Gillespie.

"Yes, and very happily married," that lady said quickly, in defense of her sainted husband.

"Ach, ja!" sighed Mrs. Klotz skeptically. "I'm for having this man come back and

take care of his family. I think I'll write him a letter."

Mrs. Klotz understood English far better than she spoke it. She smiled, and said nothing.

"I will come to see the mother to-morrow. She may think differently."

The German woman said, "Nein," with the firmness of her race.

"Why, Susanna," said Mrs. Gillespie, as she turned to go, "have I left you standing here all this time?" It was obvious that she had, and she thought a little uneasily of what the child had overheard.

Mrs. Gillespie proposed that on their way home they should visit the playground. This zealous chairman of a committee glowed with benevolence as she surveyed the swarming bars and ladders. "Now is n't that a pretty sight, and all in the fresh air and sunshine?" Susanna looked on wistfully, and felt lonely and left out in this revel of play, amidst this screaming and laughter.

"Which are they?" she asked, "the ones that you said—"

"They all look alike to me," said her friend, "though I don't suppose they do to their fathers and mothers. Now what should you say to a treat in the coffee-room? I guess it better be a glass of milk for each of us."

This appeared a tame sort of treat to Susanna, but she drank the milk obediently, and listened politely to Mrs. Gillespie's account of its Pasteurization. Little Susanna was sober with thoughts that should have been beyond her years.

"There," said Mrs. Gillespie, as she delivered Sue at her grandmother's door, "I have enjoyed your company. I never like to go round the world alone if I can help it, being rather a sociable person myself." She nodded gayly to Susanna, who smiled back a faint little smile.

The child found her aunt hemming dish-towels on the sewing-machine, and happy to be interrupted. Sue related her adventures, little by little, and disjointedly. Suddenly the child said, after some thinking, "Aunt Anna, am I a foundling?"

"A *foundling*! What should put that into your head?"

"I thought I was," said Susanna sadly. "Mrs. Gillespie said a verse — about the Lord will pick you up."

"I wonder at Mrs. Gillespie that she should let you hear such things. Of course you are not a foundling!"

Susanna grew thoughtful again. Then she laughed. "The woman thought I was Mrs. Gillespie's grandchild. I wish I was, or some relation."

Her aunt went on hemming towels, and forgot to change the current of Susanna's thoughts. In fact, she had thoughts of her own.

"Hansie and Emil are very much like Danny and me, only poor."

"I cannot understand why so sensible a person as Mrs. Gillespie took you to that place. No, they are not in the least like you and Danny."

"She said their father and mother were going to be divorced," argued Susanna.

“ My child, never use that word. It is not a word for a little girl to use.”

“ But if it’s so, how can I help using it?”

“ Children should not know about such troubles.”

“ But when it’s yourself, you have to know.”

The child looked painfully old as she said this. Anna had seen that look in the faces of the children of the poor.

“ She said if you did n’t get married, Aunt Anna, you did n’t know what troubles were. Is that the reason you did n’t get married, Aunt Anna?”

“ Susanna, this must stop!” Aunt Anna seldom spoke in that tone. “ No, dear, no, dear, I did n’t mean to hurt your feelings,— no, dear heart!” She gathered the little girl in her arms.

CHAPTER XVIII

EASTER VACATION

DANIEL kept a diary, and so zealously that he now and then wrote it up ahead. This was often the case when something of distinction was about to happen. It gave Dan a peculiar pleasure to turn a page and see a future event already entered in the past tense. Occasionally he was obliged to use an ink eraser, with the worst results ; for in his small life, too, things did not always turn out as they were planned. This time, however, having on March twenty-fifth set down these words for April third : "Went to grandma's to spend Easter," the entry was allowed to stand.

April third was at Susanna's end also a day of excitement ; for not only was Danny coming from High Top, but her father was joyfully awaited, too. Mrs. Glenn had written him a kind letter, after a long talk with Anna.

"Do you call him still my son-in-law?" she asked helplessly.

"Yes," said Anna heartily, "just as much as Jessie is your daughter. It is enough for us that he is the father of Susanna and Danny. Nothing can alter that."

"I have often thought it was difficult," Mrs. Glenn continued earnestly, yet feebly, "difficult to say just how far a divorce reaches—that is, just how *many* are divorced."

"Well, I for one don't propose to be divorced from anybody—Bert or Jessie or the children. It's contrary to nature. I am in precisely the relation to them that I have always been. I'll have nothing to do with the wicked business."

"You were always very positive," said her mother.

"I am positive now,—the only saving of Bert is to let him see his children, to make him see them. And that is what you can do for him, mother. It is our duty, mother, to have him here all we can."

In old days, Mrs. Glenn would have yielded

to her daughter's will, but would have kept up a weak fretting against her own decision. Well did Anna know the old wearing struggle by which ends were accomplished in former times. She could but rejoice in the change wrought by religion when her mother said gently, "Love should ever rule," and then added, in her old character, "Dear, why could n't *you* write a letter to Bert?"

"I think it should come from you, mother." Mrs. Glenn acceded so lovingly that Anna wondered yet again what cogency had been lacking in the old formulas.

There was certainly applied religion in the welcome Mrs. Glenn gave her son-in-law. The children were uproarious in their greeting.

"That's what a man ought to have once a day to keep him going," Warriner thought, as they clung to him.

"Bert is n't looking well," said Anna to her mother, who made no reply, only looked gentle forbearance for mistaken views. "His face is drawn and thin."

"Papa, come see my photographs I took,"

shouted Susanna, dragging her father by one arm, while Danny pulled on the other. "You've got to see my battery," said Dan.

"We need not trouble ourselves to entertain our guests," laughed Anna. "Let them just live together; that is what they suffer for."

Susanna and Dan were happy every hour, but not so much could be said of their father. A man on a visit is more or less wretched; but masculine ennui was not the source of Warriner's melancholy. He had moments with his children of poignant happiness; yet the shadow of parting would not lift.

"I wish papa would stay here all the time," said Susanna to her brother. "He has n't got much of anywhere to live. I was there. It is n't a bit like a house such as you live in."

"We haven't any of us," said Danny gloomily. "You can't call a school a place to live, or even your grandma's."

"What we need is a real house," said Susanna sagely.

"A house is n't a home, goosie. You have

to have a mother. The House Mother is pretty fair, but she ain't the real thing."

"Danny, Danny," Sue almost whispered, "I've been thinking and thinking. Do you suppose we could beg mamma to come home from Europe?"

"Don't you know—don't you understand—she isn't married to our papa any more? You are such a baby you can't understand that. She *can't* come back."

"Oh, Danny, Danny, *Danny!*"

"And that was what I came in upon," reported Warriner to Anna. "The child actually cried in my arms, 'Shan't we ever have our furniture back again?' It seems she once saw it huddled together in the storage warehouse, and it has apparently haunted her dreams."

"She should have no knowledge of such things," said her grandmother.

"How can you stop it? the mischief is done."

Strange to say, Warriner had never before got on so well with his mother-in-law. He had been accustomed to adopt a facetious tone

with her, which left her teased and bewildered, and deplored that her son-in-law was a person of no more dignity. Warriner had sobered considerably since those jocular days, but he was also acting on a hint from Anna. "You know there is a subject we take for granted, Bert. We accept what is good, and we say nothing where we disagree. You won't make jokes about the New Life, will you, Bert?"

"Not a joke, on my honor." He was, indeed, so respectful that he brought upon himself an earnest attempt to win him to the new faith.

After the children were put to bed, and Mrs. Glenn had gone upstairs, there was often a talk with Anna.

"Bert," she said one night, "take care of your health."

"I've no great love of life. Sometimes I think the sooner it's over the better."

Anna mended the fire, saying nothing. She arranged the lights and the chairs more comfortably, like a good sister.

"I'm an all-round failure, Anna. I'm the

old story of a rich man's son. You can use me to point a moral ; that's all I'm good for. I'm the proudest failure as a parent."

"Your children don't think so," said Anna, with a smile.

"What do they think, anyway ? They never tell."

"They talk together. I am afraid they talk a good deal about their affairs."

"Poor little beggars ! We are all part of the wreckage."

Anna talked of Sue and Dan, and bade him not despair of the future.

"Put in your claim for salvage, Anna."

"Oh, I want their love. I need it. That's my salvage."

"If anything happened to me, Anna, would you take charge of Dan ? I would have it down in black and white, you understand."

"Gilbert!"

"I know what you mean. I will not take my own life, I give you my word. I've got past that stage. I was saved from that. But I am talking business now. There is no one

on my side of the family whom I wish to appoint Dan's guardian. I'm rather alone in the world, you know. There will be money enough to educate him and start him."

Anna said nothing, but sat looking into the fire with saddened face.

"I need a change," Warriner continued. "I am thinking of taking a long journey."

"To Europe?"

"No! In the opposite direction. You see I can't work. Didn't I tell you I'm a failure? I have lost everything except money. I've lost health and home and happiness; I've nothing left but stocks and bonds."

Anna knitted her brows, and sought for words to help him. "With stocks and bonds you might do something to restore—"

"Not a home," he interrupted. "I might marry again as Jess has done, but a woman I would marry wouldn't marry me. There are a plenty of my own sort, but I don't take to them." Bert laughed drearily. "Strange, they don't please my taste."

"A home with Dan, perhaps,—and then

persuade his famous House Mother to take it in charge — to be your house mother."

Warriner shook his head. "With stocks and bonds I can travel and perhaps get back my health."

"You could n't take Dan with you? No, I suppose you could not."

"High Top is the wisest thing for him," said Dan's father with conviction. "When you think of it, my two children are the best case you could name of homeless children. It makes me sick to think of the fate of nine tenths of the poor little brats. And when they are high up in the world, the little dukes and duchesses—the Lord have mercy on them! Anna, it 's the children I am thinking of, and they get left out of the plays and the novels. It 's not much matter what becomes of Jessie and me—we 've brought it on ourselves, and it 's part, I suppose, of what you call the moral order, but I can't see the justice to Susanna and the boy. We ought to have stuck it out for the sake of the children."

"Justice—oh, the mystery! Shall we ever

understand? But one thing I do see, Bert, that you are coming out of this, that you are on the right track,—I am sure you will recover yourself. I think we have all learned a great deal in this year," said Anna humbly.

"Do you hear from Mrs. Charles Westlake?" asked Warriner suddenly.

"She sends stacks of postal cards to Sue, and writes frequently to mother. She has not mentioned him lately. They were in Italy and then in Switzerland, and in Paris for the winter."

Warriner laughed dismally. "American tramps in Europe! I'll try the Orient. Even at home in America we can't stay still. One fellow told me he moved every five years in order to keep up with modern improvements. Where's your homestead in this age? We need a revival of domestic piety."

They sat together thoughtful and silent, till Warriner spoke again. "Before I start on my long journey, I want to make my will, and if you agree to it, I am going to make you Daniel's guardian."

“I agree to it, Bert,” said Anna softly.

“Susanna, according to law, belongs to her mother, but you have been graciously permitted to be her guardian so far. How long is this to continue? Or is that none of my business?”

“Susanna should go away to school next fall.”

“Why not send her to a day school here?”

“I told you of my experience with Miss Leslie. I have no doubt there are others that would take her, but every one here knows her history—”

“And a child should have no history—exactly.”

“I feel like protecting Sue from the gossips, and not so much from grown-up gossips, as from other children. Susanna came home and told me—well, I won’t repeat it to you, Bert. Children can be such little brutes.”

“Be good to them both, Anna, if anything happens to me. It probably won’t, but it’s no matter if it does. I shall feel safe about them. You are a good woman, Anna.”

Anna could not speak. The fire had died down, and they bade each other good-night.

CHAPTER XIX

YEAR END AT HIGH TOP

THERE 'S nothing for it but to go," said Mrs. Holladay, turning over her morning letters. "We must hear Billy speak his piece."

"What 's the date?" inquired Billy's father.

"June twentieth, and everything green and beautiful at High Top. Just the holiday you need, Ben. We couldn 't let him take part in the debate without our being there, — a prominent part, too. And Billy is in the scenes from William Tell, in German. We will make up a party. Jane Wilkins always wants to go where there are boys."

"Better engage rooms. The wind-up at High Top is a jam of loving parents. No, that 's a fact, I would n't miss Billy's oration."

"I believe it 's a debate on the tariff, and he only twelve years old." Mrs. Holladay referred proudly to her letter.

Mr. Holladay threw back his head and

laughed loud. "I'll bet you've got him in Congress by this time, mother."

"He's our only boy," said Mrs. Holladay apologetically.

"You don't seem to fink much of girls," remarked Polly, with her mouth full of muf-fin. "Ain't you goin' to take me?"

Her mother was reading Billy's letter a second time and did not hear. "He says Dan Warriner,—little Danny, you know—is on the other side of the tariff, and he is Tell's son in the play. Oh, don't let them shoot at that apple! If he had a mother, she would protest. I feel as if I should write a letter."

"Keep cool," said Mr. Holladay. "Well, I'll agree to go, but I must n't be kept away more than one night, remember."

We therefore are not surprised to find Mr. and Mrs. Holladay and Miss Jane Wilkins walking in the High Top gardens at sunset on a night in June.

"I want to see little Danny Warriner," said Miss Jane, soon after her arrival. "We got to be friends at Christmas."

" Ben tells me not to be sentimental about Danny. He says he's a boy all right, and he'll make a man, if you don't coddle him. He must n't suspect that he has wrongs and sorrows. It is all very well to caution us ; but the harm is done. I am afraid that Dan is injured for life. He sulks, and there is reason in it. The child thinks,—you can see him at it."

They were on their way to the little boys' dormitory, for Miss Jane said she had set her heart on seeing the House Mother they talked so much about. " Well, upon my word," Mr. Holladay called to the ladies, " if here are n't those youngsters tearing after us !" Billy and Dan stood panting before them, holding their heads stiff so as not to be kissed in public. Billy could not help himself, but Dan stood off, and the ladies respected his dignity. Unreasonable little mortal, he thought there was a ridiculous amount of hugging, and yet he felt left out of all this family affection.

" It's to-night the play is. You'll have to go early to get seats," said Billy. " The fellers

have got an awful lot of relations come to see us act."

"Are they going to shoot the apple from this dear child's head—that is what I want to know," said Mrs. Holladay.

Danny had edged around beside her when she said that, but Billy answered aggrieved, "They cut that scene out, and that was all the fun."

"I am thankful to hear it. Now I am prepared to sit comfortably." She had Danny by the hand. "How was your Easter vacation, dear?"

"Fine!" said Dan. "We went somewhere every day with father. My father is going to Japan," he added proudly. "I wish I was."

"Is your grandmother here?" inquired Mrs. Holladay politely.

"There is n't anybody here," said Danny, looking around the shrubbery as if to find somebody he could lay claim to.

"You must come and eat breakfast with us at the hotel to-morrow, Danny, if the House Mother will let you."

"*She will*," said Dan. "She ain't the mean sort."

"Chapel's next," shouted Billy. "There's the bell."

The two women sitting together in the visitors' pews had tears of feeling in their eyes as the troops of boys took their places. "I think of their mothers," Mrs. Holladay was saying, "of all the hopes and fears and prayers."

Mr. Holladay was making a rough count of the boys, and was marveling how so many young rascals were kept in order. He did, however, search out his own young rascal, and kept a loving eye on him throughout the service. He forgot, as they all did, the little Dan Warriner, squeezed between two W's on the other side of the chapel.

The boys had been writing home for weeks, requesting costumes for William Tell, and mothers and sisters had been active. Many of these were now upon the scene, to observe their own handiwork as well as to admire the acting of their young performers. One of Dan's dark days had been when the assistant master

in charge of the play had said cheerily, "Well, Warriner, where 's your costume? You are a peasant lad of about the thirteenth century. You want to get somebody to make you a rough tunic or something of the sort. You can leave your arms bare, and your legs, below your knickerbockers, and there you are! Simplest thing in the world! You 'll need some gilt braid on yours, Holladay. Your mother will know how to get you up." Mrs. Holladay sometimes wondered if those who undertook motherhood realized all that it involved in the way of "costume," both real clothes and play clothes. She labored patiently on this occasion to meet the requirements of the young schoolmaster.

Little Warriner wrote no letters, but looked so low in his mind after supper that the House Mother made tactful inquiries. She listened thoughtfully. "You just leave it to me. I 'll see you look like a peasant's son, so there won't be any kind of doubt about it, dear. There 's a big piece of burlaps come round my new bureau. There 's your toonic, if that 's what

you call it, and a trunk strap wound round your waist once or twice will make you out an ancient barbarian, if anything will, won't it, dear?"

On the great night, the House Mother sat and viewed her work, and applauded her boy. "Too bad his folks are n't here to see," she thought.

The play over, each boy actor was surrounded and examined and complimented in detail. Daniel, in his burlaps and trunk-strap, became fiercely jealous of Billy's gilt braid, which his family were absorbed in. Even the House Mother was talking with strangers.

"You oughter had the apple," a big boy was saying to Dan; "that's where you missed it." And Dan felt himself a failure on the stage.

The next day offered a programme of "sports"; but Mr. Holladay declared there could be no sport equal to an infant tariff debate, and elected that among the many attractions.

"How did you get primed?" he inquired of his son. "You never talked with me."

"We read things, and the English teacher told us. Dan is on the other side; says he believes it, too."

"The other side!" laughed the stanch Republican, firm for a high protective tariff. "Well, I'll give him a fair hearing."

Mr. Holladay's face was a study when his only son rose, and read in a clear treble: "Resolved, that a tariff for revenue only is preferable to the present high protective tariff." The father stiffened himself to listen. Tickled and enraged by turns, he heard his cherished doctrines held up to scorn, and himself called an enemy to civilization. The applause that greeted Billy left Mr. Holladay in painful confusion, and when he joined in it himself, and pounded with his cane, his brain reeled. Tears of pride filled Mrs. Holladay's eyes, and Miss Jane was radiant. Billy's father looked about rather sheepishly as the applause died away. "I had to take it hard, didn't I? Bright boy, though. Now let us see what the other side has to say."

Again the applause made painful confusion

in Mr. Holladay's mind. The unexceptionable statements of a heavy, droning boy did not rouse his enthusiasm, yet his principles bade him make all the noise he could. "I am waiting for Dan. He is on the right side." Little Dan took part boldly in the discussion, and argued with solemn earnestness for a high tariff on wool.

"What extraordinary things school-children do in these days!" said Miss Jane. "My niece — eleven — has been dramatizing scenes from the Iliad, and one of my nephews has learned to make apple-sauce and lamp-shades."

Mr. Holladay's distraction was to be pitied when he heard that his son's side had won in the debate. "You spoke up well, William, I won't deny that. But who do you say put that stuff into you? Why didn't you ask me?"

"I read most of it," answered Billy.

"That you did!" said the practical man. "*Read* it! You and I will have a debate of our own some day, and I will teach you a thing or two. Your views are mistaken, my son, but you made the best of a bad case."

Dan hung about wistfully. His part had been so small that none but a very near relative would have made much of him. He turned on his heel, and sought comfort in his supper.

In the early evening, the wife of the Head Master "received" the boys and their friends, and good-bys for the year were exchanged.

"I shan't go," said Dan to the boy next him at table. "I don't think so much of ice cream as all that."

"I saw you eat a lot last time," said the rude boy. "You've *got* to say good-by to the Head Master. Be sure you tell him High Top's tip-top. I did once, and it tickled the old boy. You try it on him."

Dan was silent and disagreeable. There were voices, however, at the house door. The happy party, as they said, hunted together, and they were all enlisted in the search for Danny. Mr. Holladay shook hands with him as an upholder of a sound tariff, and the little boy held his head high again. There are such quick changes from manly to infantile in your

lad of twelve! He needs much mothering and much fathering.

“ You try to convince my boy, sir.”

“ I did try,” said Dan. “ You can’t do it.”

“ Well, don’t let us lose you from the Republican party, my man.”

“ I’m going to stick,” said Dan. “ My father’s a Republican.”

“ Glad to hear it. I’d like to meet him.”

“ He’s going to Japan. He’s on the way.”

“ Japan’s a great country. What do you know about Japan?”

Dan was happy to tell.

“ See how that child takes to Ben,” whispered Mrs. Holladay fondly to her friend.

“ Ben is a good father to boys. Danny is in need of just that handling. Ben is right: we women are too tender of Danny. We pity him; we never can forget.”

The Head Master’s reception came in due order. Mr. Holladay exchanged jovial remarks with him; the ladies spoke gracefully of the year-end festivities, and the two boys were pushed forward for a farewell handshake. As

the little party turned away, they encountered the House Mother in her best black silk. But why was the House Mother's face so tragic? They saw her make her way to the Head Master. She drew him aside and showed him a telegram. "I think it would be best for you to tell him, Mrs. Balls. No one could do it so gently as you. Better confer with his friend Mrs. Holladay. I will see the boy later."

"The little boy! The little Danny! My heart's breakin' for him!"

CHAPTER XX

THE POSTMAN'S BAG—1903

Anna to Pauline

EAR PAULINE—Gilbert Warriner is dead. He died in a hospital in San Francisco, among strangers. To-day there has been a funeral service in the chapel of Roseland cemetery. I went down by the morning train. There was a slow, steady rain, and a low, dark sky. Roseland is far from the city, and many friends of the family are out of town at this season. There were but few people in the chapel,—some men friends of Bert, and a sister-in-law on the other side, who made me understand how inconvenient it had been for her to come. There was the briefest service, read by a stranger, got at in a hurry. Then we turned away and left him. Later, they were to lay him to rest beside his mother. On some beautiful day I shall take the two children to cover his grave with flowers.

I cannot write any more now, but I knew you would wish to hear so much as this. Do write to me.

ANNA.

Pauline to Anna

DEAREST ANNA,—You never failed Gilbert Warriner as a sister, take comfort in that; and you can do everything for his children. Do not, I entreat you, brood longer over the failure of his marriage and his home. That ended with the scene you described in your letter. Now let your brother live for you again in Danny and Susanna.

I know well how you must suffer for them; the grief of children is the hardest of all things to see. I know how you will gather them into your love, and how their love will bless you and soothe your own pain.

Ah, how Death opens afresh all the great questions! I sit here to-night, trying to follow Gilbert Warriner on that “long journey” you told me he had foreboding of. Ah, if we knew what he knows in these first hours! He is wiser than all the philosophers. Or is death

the end? I cannot think so, dearest Anna. Strengthen me with your own belief. Tell me all your thoughts.

Your loving friend,

PAULINE.

Anna to Pauline

DEAR FRIEND,— I wish you had ever seen my poor brother. He was faulty enough, but he might so easily have been different. It needed but a touch upon his character, and Jessie was not the woman, I suppose, to give it. Perhaps he was weak if he needed that support from another, if his life was so imperfect and ineffective without it, but are we mortals to be called weak if we need one another so desperately?

I went to High Top and brought home Danny, and the children are both with us. I shall take them soon to the country of the Little Lakes. The buoyancy of children is merciful. The little brother and sister were inconsolable when they were told of their loss. Our hearts were wrung with their grief. At

first they said almost nothing. If you have ever known such a silence of children, you know what an unnatural, awesome thing it can be. I longed for noise, and when I heard a laugh from Sue, I thanked God for it. The silence lasted longer with Daniel. I heard Sue ask, "Will mamma cry when she hears?" Danny did not answer, and I realized how much older he is than Sue. We did not put the children into black; my mother was quite right about that. Her way of taking Bert's death is both trying and beautiful. But what is her insistence on the reality of spirit but the very thing we have been taught all our lives,—"the faith that looks through death." That inspired "*through*"! Surely, it is no new discovery. Yet I will not treat death so lightly as she does; it does not befit the dignity of life.

But she has been a sweet, old-fashioned grandmother with the children, and has helped to bring them back to every-day living. Their elasticity is wonderful. They are so pathetically glad to be together, and that helps us.

The endless talk between them puzzles an aunt : what can they find to talk about? Yet, whenever I overhear their conversation, there is something that sets me thinking. They little know how profound they are—these babes!

Nothing could exceed the kindness of your friends the Holladays. They happened to be at High Top when the news was brought to little Dan. Mrs. Holladay took him away with her that night, kept him with her, and gave him into my charge next day. Danny loves that tender mother.

Your devoted

ANNA.

Pauline to Anna

DEAREST ANNA,—I must write often when I am thinking of you as I am at present. Our letters have been so long filled with this sad story that now, when in a sense it is ended, my thoughts go back and survey it all again. I am wondering what is her share in this sorrow, that poor wife's.

There is no reasoning away the miserable regret, but out of it, I believe, another happiness may arise, for them and for you, my beloved friend, even though it have always a strain of sadness in it. Is deep experience ever a total loss? The "student habit" bids me learn and learn to the very end. It seems to me, from knowing this story, I shall wish to live more tenderly, more carefully, not to mar any life I may come near.

Look forward, dear Anna, to the future of the children, and to your own. There is happiness on the horizon.

Your faithful friend,

PAULINE.

Daniel to Mrs. Holladay

DEAR MRS. HOLLADAY,—I got your letter, and I thank you very much. Aunt Anna and Sukey and I all went to Roseland yesterday, and we carried roses and pinks and other flowers, and we covered my father's grave all over so you could hardly see it. There was a bird singing all the time which made it less

sad for us. The worst was when we came away. It was a long ride in a carriage. Aunt Anna sat between us because she said the other seat was too far away. To-morrow she is going to take us to the Little Lakes, where I wish Billy was coming up, too. She says can't he? There's boats and swimming and fishing, but that's when you miss your father. Tell Billy he's got to come along.

Yours affectionately,

DANIEL B. WARRINER.

Susanna to Mrs. Gillespie

DEAR MRS. GILLESPIE,—Dan is writing another letter to his great friend Mrs. Holladay, so I am going to write one to my great friend, too,—and that's *you*,—are n't you glad?

Dr. Gillespie came up here to the Little Lakes, but he stayed only just one day. I asked him if you knew he was here, and he said no, you were visiting your sister-in-law, so I thought I would tell you. He took me out once in a row-boat with Danny, and Aunt

Anna went, too. And once they went out alone, by themselves, and did n't ask us, and Danny was just hopping.

We have a very nice time, except that Dan keeps wishing and wishing that papa was here. Oh, so do I! And I wish mamma was. I don't want you to think I have forgotten about my mamma. I thought you did once, but you never saw my mamma.

The air does Aunt Anna good, she says, and it makes her look so bright and pretty, you ought to just see her. Danny is the one that's pale. I worry considerable about Danny.

I hope you are having a nice visit at your sister-in-law's. Danny's wife will be mine, and I wonder if I shall ever like her as well as you do Mrs. Sophia Greeley. No, I shan't, I know already. She'll have to be pretty perfect if I do. I suppose it's because you and Mrs. Greeley have so many jokes; that makes people get along so much better, when they laugh.

I wish Bessie Amory was here, because

there's so much Nature. She and I have a Nature Club. We love Nature — she says you have to, at school, but we really and truly do. We are studying ants. I wish I could describe it here, it is all such blueness of the sky and such greenness of the woods and such shiny sparkles on the water. Aunt Anna says it's *divine*. You ought to come up here, too, but you ought to stay more than just one day.

Your loving little friend,

SUSANNA.

CHAPTER XXI

THE RETURN

MRS. GLENN sat busily and peacefully sewing. Only the two notes of the knife-grinder's bell in the street and the rumble of an occasional grocer's wagon broke the quiet of midsummer. Some of Mrs. Glenn's friends were in the mountains or at the seashore in the East, for the "best people" of this pleasant city knew their Boston and their Beverly, and they believed that Boston and Beverly knew how to distinguish between themselves and mere "Westerners." Others among Mrs. Glenn's neighbors went to nearer waters, for Nature has put forth all her witchery in the Little Lakes, while the majestic Great Lakes are no poor substitute for the grandeur of the ocean. Anna's mother said, however, with considerable truth, that, for her part, she preferred the comforts of home, and she praised justly the summer climate of her city by the Lake.

She laid down her work, and took a letter from Mrs. Meserole out of her dainty work-basket; re-read the letter and placed it again at hand. Then she closed her eyes in peace.

Suddenly there was an imperious ringing. The telephone has altered the mechanism of the drama of life. What were once scenes are now enacted without setting, all the passions thrilling over the wires, but disembodied and invisible. The telephone has, in fact, created a new drama. Fancy Shakespeare's plays telephonized!

"Hello! Is Mrs. Glenn at home?"

"I am Mrs. Glenn," was the dignified answer.

"Guess who this is," said a voice suppressing its excitement.

"I don't recognize you, pardon me."

"You don't — recognize — my — voice? Now do you?"

"No; I can't say I do."

"Oh, mamma, it's Jess!"

"Jessie, Jessie, not Jessie? Where are you, where are you, child?"

"I'm home, mother! I've come home! I'm in a booth at the South-western. Nobody can hear us."

"My dear child, my dear child, I must come to you."

"No, no, I am coming right up to the house."

"It is so long since we have heard from you. We didn't know where to reach you. Why didn't you write that you were coming?"

"Oh, don't ask me, mother. I just want to get home. Mother, where are the children? I am dying to see them."

There was dismay on Mrs. Glenn's face as she recognized that the letter had not found her daughter, that letter which should have told Jessie of the death of Gilbert Warriner.

"The children are at the Little Lakes with Anna. Take a cab and come right up, Jessie."

"Is Bert in Chicago?" asked the daughter suddenly and sharply.

"My dear child, we wrote. You must have sailed soon after the letter started from here."

“Tell me, mother! Don’t keep me waiting.”

“Jessie, Bert *passed on*, the twentieth of June.”

There was no answer.

“Come right up here, Jessie. Take a cab just outside the telephone booths. Don’t you hear me?”

No answer.

“Shall I speak louder? Jessie! Oh, they have cut us off. And I have no clue to her. She will call me up again; it is only to wait patiently. Or perhaps she is on her way.”

Moments passed, and Mrs. Glenn, in honest distress of mind, was about to order a cab for the station, when a sharp ring called her. “Hello! Hello! Is this 3826 Lake?”

“Yes,” answered Mrs. Glenn weakly to the strange voice.

“It was lucky I kept your number when I got you for her. The lady in the booth fainted. We saw her tumble right over against the glass. We got her out on the couch in the waiting-room. She’ll be all right. The booth was shut up tight. It was awful hot and close.

She says, will you come down here? Goo' by."

By the time Mrs. Glenn reached the South-western station, her daughter was trying to find the Venetian hat-pins that had been laid down carelessly. The mother and daughter walked steadily across the waiting-room to meet each other, and Jessie hid her face against her mother's cheek.

"Come home, dear," was all that was said.

An hour later Jessie lay on the sofa, with her mother hovering softly about her. A faint upright line had appeared between Jessie's eyes, and her mouth drooped plaintively to one side. She held her lips firmly together—lips that had always parted.

"Now I am ready, mother; now I can bear it. Tell me all about poor Bert, and let me have it over with." She listened with a puzzled face to her mother's version of the passing of Gilbert Warriner. "Well, if I could believe as you do, and seem so sure!" she said tearfully.

"You can, my dear, you shall!" said her mother tenderly and joyfully.

At last Mrs. Glenn took courage to ask the question: "Where is your husband, Jessie?"

"Don't ever mention his name to me, mother. He is dead to me,— a good deal more dead than Bert. I can shed tears for Bert—"

"There, there, child, don't cry."

"My heart is— is — broken," sobbed Jessie. "I have had more than I can bear. I was all alone," she sobbed with pity for herself. "I had just money to get back—"

"Forget your troubles, dear. You are at home."

"Tell me about the children," said Jessie, comforted. "Sue wrote that she was making you too long a visit. Why didn't you send her off to school if she got on your nerves? I shall probably put her in a French convent when I go back."

Susanna's grandmother gave an affectionate but rather vague account of her.

"Has she grown pretty? She's just at the homely age, I suppose. I'm dying to see her. Can't you hurry them home?"

Mrs. Glenn hesitated. Her daughter laughed.

“Afraid of Anna, still? What is all this about Anna’s being guardian to Dan?”

“She loves the children.”

“Anna’s such an old maid; what does she know about children?”

“Anna loves the children,” repeated Mrs. Glenn.

“How is Dan? I suppose he grows over night. Tall, is he? I must see them.”

“I will write to-day. I will leave it to Anna,” said Mrs. Glenn.

“Mother, suppose you don’t write,” sighed Jessie wearily. “Just let me get rested. Put me in my own room and let me sleep a week. Don’t tell Anna—let them come home and find me. The children need the country air. Is everybody out of town? I hope so.”

“I should have said myself it was better to warn them.”

“Did you have a turn when I telephoned from the station? Oh, I forgot you never have turns nowadays. Mamma, you are improved. I wish I could get rid of my nerves.”

“You may, my dear child.”

"I might find life dull without them."

Jessie lay thoughtful on her sofa. At last she spoke softly, "Mother, have you a black gown I could wear? I feel like it." Mrs. Glenn remonstrated gently, but was persuaded to visit her store-room, and Jessie was soon absorbed in alterations of waist trimmings.

Days passed. Mrs. Glenn was not much given to analysis of character, and she found herself bewildered by her daughter's behavior. She had expected to find Jessie profoundly changed, and so, at moments, she appeared to be. In these moments her mother offered her the new religion, and met a response that filled her with tender hope.

Then Jessie would yawn and complain of midsummer dullness. "What do you find to kill time, mamma, in this deadly season? I pity you." She selected a bonbon with great care from the box beside her. "I *ought* to go and overhaul my possessions in the storage warehouse. I 've almost forgotten what I do own, it 's so long since I have had a home."

"You *ought* to go and see your Aunt Wellman, Jessie."

"Tell me something interesting to do," she yawned. She was restless, vacant, without sustained interest in anything—not even in herself. "I believe I'm the dullest of the lot," she said good-humoredly. "It's come to that."

"The children will soon be here," said Mrs. Glenn, not without a pang at her own inadequacy. There were, indeed, no deeps in mother or daughter to call or answer to each other.

Time hung heavier and heavier till the visit to the Little Lakes was up, and Anna and the children were expected on the afternoon train. Jessie was roused to strong, natural feeling; the dullness and the restlessness were clear to her: she had wanted her children. She felt noble all at once, and self-respecting. A sound, instinctive jealousy of Anna took hold of her. The children were hers! She would stand in the doorway with open arms and take possession of them both, and Anna should retire to her place as aunt.

The sound of a cab coming rapidly round

the corner sent a shiver of emotion through Jessie's frame. In an instant she wished that she had followed her mother's advice and had given them warning. She feared them — her own children ! She shrank back from the doorway, and far into the room to the shelter of a heavy curtain.

“Mother, tell them !” she cried in anguish ; “they must not come upon me.”

Mrs. Glenn was almost as agitated, but with her new self-mastery, she said, “Anna, children, who do you suppose is here ? Children, it is your mother !”

“Where? where? oh, where?” they cried together.

“In there ; go find her. My dear Anna, this is a great surprise to you.”

But something shone in Anna that was greater. As she kissed her mother tenderly, she appeared to forget Jessie clinging to her children. “Mother, I must tell you,” whispered Anna.

The two shrank away from Jessie's weeping, and softly went up the stairs together.

“Well,” said Miss Daisy Parker, dropping in upon a friend, “have you heard the news of the Glenns? Jessie home, and Anna engaged—things happening all in a heap. I am not in the least surprised about Anna—not in the slightest degree surprised. I *knew* it from the day I saw her give him a cup of tea. I have only to see two people together; you can’t deceive me. I saw her the day after she came back from the Lakes, and I detected a mysterious elevation that could n’t have been caused by the return of Jessie, now could it?”

“But that’s not all,” continued Miss Daisy Parker. “Right after the wedding,—and that’s to be in October,—Mrs. Glenn and Jessie are going to Europe together. They say Jessie has taken up the New Life, and I’m of the opinion that it is the very best thing she could do for herself. Oh, but I am glad about Anna! If ever there was a girl that deserved some happiness on her own account! And he is simply *fine*!”

“What becomes of those two children? I have n’t heard. I wonder!”

CHAPTER XXII

THE POSTMAN'S BAG — 1910

Anna to Pauline

EAR FRIEND,— It was like you to remember our anniversary, and to write me one of your dearest letters. Seven years since that October day when you stood beside me! You and I do not write so often nowadays — perhaps because we were never before so sure of each other. Do not call it the lack of time, — the fault of your book or my children. They can never be so “absorbing” as to take away from our friendship. They enrich it, as we have seen with every year.

Indeed, I am a happy woman. You are the one friend to whom I can sound the praises of my husband — you and his mother. On that very day your letter came, I found this in a book: “The bringer of light and happiness, the calmer and pacifier and stimulator, is one

of the chiefest of doctors." That is my husband, "helper and friend of mankind."

You used to think me a person in rather a minor key — you said you found it interesting. What do you say to me now — am I a too comfortable matron? Am I monotonously happy? — do my letters read that way? My life runs even, steady, true, — my duty clear, my way certain. We are a happy family, — we and the three babies, — for you know Mother Gillespie insisted on retiring to live with an adored sister-in-law. We are trying to teach our children the tender consideration each for the rest that is the basis of family beauty. We are beginning to fit them for marriage: "in honor preferring one another" as their watchword.

Now that I have children of my own, I see how far I fell short with little Susanna. I knew my inadequacy at the time, but something was lacking in me that I could not attain to, — some spring of feeling that was not reached. Yet my affection for Susanna was the preparation, as you said then; it unclosed my heart

— made everything happen inevitably. I remember that you liked “the logic of my marriage.” It would never have happened but for Dan and Susanna, who softened the heart of a stoical aunt. It all came just as I felt worn out with pretending to be strong.

Their own loss stands unrequited. You don’t get something for nothing, and you don’t abolish cause and effect. There is a shadow cast forward upon their whole lives.

They have spent these seven years in various homes ; they have traveled with their mother ; they have had some pleasant school-days. The two children were thrown upon a world of kindness, but thrown upon the world they were. What of the children cast upon a world of neglect and cruelty ? I have known those, too. They all had an inalienable right to care and love and preparation for life, since they had been obliged to live. I hear the “cry of the children” of unhappy homes, as I hear the children of the factories.

You know they entered at Ann Arbor this

fall—both freshmen. I wanted Susanna at my own college, and I wanted Dan at Harvard; but they decided the matter for themselves. If you were to see them as they were here last Sunday, you might have called them a charming and happy boy and girl. But they went to church with us, and heard an original and powerful sermon from the text, “If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone?” There is a melancholy strain in Dan, and he was sombre the rest of the day. He said a bitter thing when he came home, this boy of eighteen: it would have been sad from a man of fifty. Think of all the imagery of the home spoiled for them—every tender reference to father and mother, throughout literature and throughout life!

Mother and Jessie are still abroad, though always coming home, they say, “the next winter.” They appear happy together, and absorbed in their new religion. Who shall deny it them? If I believe in anything, it is in “*varieties of religious experience.*” Yet, after

all, is it not the same thing in the end? Religion is religion, though there is difference in nomenclature. Mother and Jessie seem to have got the thing they craved, though I do not relish their amazing vocabulary. I deny, moreover, that the only way to introduce love and patience and forbearance is by this sweet unreasonableness.

When are you coming, dear Pauline, to visit our cheerful Middle West? Oh, it is good to live on the Great Lakes, at the very heart of your country—at the very lungs of it, some say. Come, you effete Easterner, come, let us have Christmas together—you and Dan and Sue and the Gillespies, big and little.

Your old devoted

ANNA.

Pauline to Anna

DEAREST ANNA,—The Holladays asked me first, but I will tell them I am going to you. Mind you have Mother Gillespie there.

Far be it from me, my dear, to gainsay your view of matrimony: only tolerate my content in my chosen sphere. The risk is too great for me. I incline to the Byronic view, and —

“ wisely bar

Love from amongst my griefs — for such the affections are.”

Moreover, where, in the happiest event, would be my “academic freedom,” to which I have grown so wonted? No; a cap and gown for me to the end of the chapter! I have opportunity for the ideal life, without interference or compromise. Selfish and unwomanly? Oh, I wonder! At all events, dear Anna, the position you urge upon me so affectionately does not “appeal.” Never would I be the step-mother of that madcap Viola. If ever I fall into that predicament, pity me!

I am sending you a reprint of an old pamphlet of 1668, which I came across in the British Museum: “A Plain Discourse on the Mercy of having good Parents, with the Duties of Children that have such Parents.” You will notice a bit of preface by your friend. For I love “the simple graces of antiquity.”

Permit me, my dear modern friend, to linger here among the ages. It is their spirit I pursue—I leave the spirit of the age to others.

Seven years have been so eventful for you, so *still* for me! In all that time, I only wrote a book, a little book of confidential essays; but it was a really great event to me when I sent it out among strangers. I entered into a quite new relation to the world. It has brought me no fame,—only a sort of intimate friendship with a little circle of people whom I have never seen. I write for them, and they look for me: somewhere our spirits meet and are happy together. Writer and reader,—subtle, mystical is the relation! Now another handful of essays is nearly ready, and you will recognize the stimulus of many of my thoughts. Do people know what women are to one another intellectually in these days? You will find “To A. D. G.” inscribed at the beginning; for it was you who gave me the title of my book, you remember, and a greater service there is none, believe me.

It is seven years since I last saw Dan and

Sue. Therefore I look forward with special eagerness to the holidays. I shall be glad to be in a home at Christmas time, for I love winter on the domestic side,—not Cowper more. With you, as with the Holladays, Winter is

“king of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, homeborn happiness.”

Give my best regards to your husband, and my thanks for his invitation for Christmas. You and he are delightfully united in hospitality, and I must needs say you have even communicated the spirit to your servants, who appear to think “company” as much of a lark as the children do. Altogether you are a family whom it warms one’s heart to visit.

I am much interested to hear of Jessie and your mother. Poor Jessie! how often I have seen the derelicts adrift in Europe! There is reason in it. It is easier to live, easier to get one’s self amused over there,—easier to change about, to encamp for a night. You say in your mother’s case it is economy; and now that your old home is gone, she has less

motive for return. I half expect to end that way myself, with an old age of study abroad. How does that strike you? Far better than to be embroiled with a *Viola*! We have not seen yet the old age of the "college woman." Very soon we shall, ah me! Rather a fine thing I fancy it may be.

Look for me the day before Christmas, then, my dear!

Your faithful friend,

PAULINE.

Susanna to Dr. Gillespie

DEAR UNCLE NED,—Did you ever know that I thought of you for an uncle before Aunt Anna did? It was my idea! And now you are a *great* success!

I like Ann Arbor, but of course I am homesick for you and Aunt Anna. You and she seem like home to me since grandma's house was torn down and the trees, and an apartment house built on that corner. Somehow nothing *wipes out* like an apartment house — you can't imagine anything else. I am sev-

enteen; old enough to have some memories, but things have changed so fast I get very much mixed up. It is only you and Aunt Anna that have stayed the same.

I am glad that we are to be four years in one place. We did n't know exactly what to tell the census man. Dan told him it was more Ann Arbor than any other place. Mamma says we are to stay with her next summer, she has n't decided where.

This is my first letter to you from Ann Arbor. I am a two-weeks-old freshman, so I am not of much account *yet*. Dan spoke at the first class meeting, and I sat on the back seat, and was n't I proud? The girl next me said, "Who's that? He's got it in him!" That was our introduction, and now she is my best friend in college. She is my dear Mary Brooks.

I thought we could furnish our own rooms — Dan's in a boys' dormitory, and mine, 'way at the other end of the campus, miles away, is n't it hard? — well, I thought we could furnish them with the things out of the storage warehouse, but Dan was n't willing. I like old

things, even when they make you sad. So we have partly college things and partly new, and tell Aunt Anna my room is perfectly lovely, and I will send her a photograph I took myself.

And now who do you suppose is my Latin teacher? Your very own niece Cicely! And does n't she just adore *you*! She asked Dan and me to tea in her study the first thing. Dan hates tea, but he ate cakes enough to make up.

And who do you suppose has been to visit us already? Mrs. Holladay and Miss Jane Wilkins. That is the kind of friends Mary Brooks and I are going to be — just keep on forever, like "Emily and Jane." Danny did n't say he was glad to see them, but he just shone! Sometimes I have to work to keep Danny's spirits up, but not that day. It was a perfect shame that Billy went to Yale, just because his father did. I was *so* afraid that Dan would want to go, too. Dan always comes round Sunday nights — says I'm his best girl. I am — so far — but oh dear, it won't be long! There

are so many pretty ones, but such ugly boys!
Dan is the very best looking one I 've seen.

Hugs and kisses for Nancy and Jamie and Babykin, and lots of love for you two old dears. Yes, indeed, we 'll come Christmas—on the run!

Your affectionate niece,
SUSANNA.

Daniel to Aunt Anna

DEAR AUNT ANNA, — Mother wrote to me to attend to that storage business. Why don't she send the whole lot to an auction room? I don't ever want to see them again. Mother lets me attend to a lot of her business for her. I 've got some ideas about investments : I know I could turn her out a better income. She is always wanting money. But if you say so, I will consult Uncle Ned.

Sukey said she was writing, and I don't suppose that she has left me any news. I am going to like it here first-rate. Billy Holladay made a mistake. I don't know just how a fellow feels, because my father did n't graduate

at any college. Father had a good education, though, to be an architect, and he knew a lot about other things. I have about made up my mind to be an architect. There's going to be a lot of building west of here the next twenty-five years. This country is going to fill up so as to surprise you. I would n't go East if I could. Billy Holladay says he's going to settle in New York. That's where he makes another mistake. Too many High Top fellows go East.

Sukey's holding her own. Some fellows laugh at me because I've brought a sister along to keep me straight. I'll see to it she sticks to her books. Susanna and I get along first-rate.

How are all the kids? I'll see 'em Christmas.

Your affectionate nephew,

DANIEL B. WARRINER.

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